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## The Danger of Lowering Professional Standards \*

When, at the beginning of September of last year, not only the Fiscal Conference met for its usual fall meeting, but approximately two hundred additional men came to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, as members of a large Centennial Committee to consider ways, means, and plans for the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Saxon immigration, the key-note that was suggested for the protracted celebration was that of *reconsecration*. But it would hardly require the formal resolutions of such a conference nor the special arrangements made by the various District committees to remind us of the lessons which should come to our mind in connection with the centenary of the Saxon immigration. One of the most significant features of the Old Testament festivals is found in the fact that the Lord combined the strictly religious and doctrinal meaning of the festivals with the commemoration of historical events. Thus every celebration of the Passover reminded the faithful Israelite of the redemption of his fathers from the bondage of Egypt; every attendance at Pentecost presented the picture of the establishment of Israel as a nation at Mount Sinai; every observance of the Feast of Tabernacles was intended as a reminder of the fact that the fathers of Israel lived in tents, or booths, in the wilderness. All the festivities connected with these annual celebrations had the definite object of causing the members of the Jewish Church to reconsecrate themselves to Jehovah, the covenant God, and to the high ideals of the agreement made in the course of the forty years spent in the wilderness.

But the word reconsecration presupposes and implies a recognition of shortcomings, failures, sins of commission and omission. It signifies a recognition and a concession of faults and frailties

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\* This is the first article in a series entitled "The Pastor's Professional Growth," which is to run through the entire year.

as well as of an, at least occasionally, conscious neglect of duty. It demands of us that we earnestly consider words such as those which were spoken by Dr. Walther in a sermon delivered in the year 1870. Speaking on the text Gal. 5, 7, he reviewed the chief events in the history of the Saxon Lutherans; he showed that a marked deterioration in faith and in love had taken place and then addressed some powerful words of admonition and encouragement to his audience. Referring to the early history of the immigrants, he said in part: "It is true, at that time we were still sadly deficient in the true knowledge; many and dangerous errors still darkened our souls. But must we not confess to the glory of God that nevertheless our faith in God was at that time living and powerful and our highest possession and treasure? Had we not emigrated on account of our faith? Had we not on account of this faith gladly left house and home, our fatherland, and many of us the dearest things which we possessed in this world? And what did we seek here? Did we, like most immigrants, seek mountains of gold, a comfortable living, glory, and honor? No; our only true object was to save our souls, to live here according to our faith, to establish here the pure and right worship of God, and to have a truly Christian school for our children. We were pitifully poor, but that did not hinder us from streaming into the place of refuge granted to us by men of another denomination to meet there on all Sundays and holidays and gladly to sacrifice our last pennies for the establishment, maintenance, and furtherance of church and school. Although forsaken and covered with ignominy, we did not court the friendship of the world, but were fearful and anxious lest we be contaminated by the world and thus be deprived of our heavenly treasure. With what zeal we at that time read our small, purely Lutheran paper, while we considered it abominable even to admit newspapers into our homes which made mockery of religion, much less to waste our precious time with the reading of their lascivious entertainment!" And then Walther proceeds to demonstrate just how far, according to his observations, his hearers had departed from the high ideals of the early years, in discontinuing the observance of festival days, in neglecting the Word in church and at home, in turning toward the pleasures and honors of the world, in showing a deplorable lack of interest in religious periodicals and in the matters pertaining to the kingdom of God, in the indifference and coldness of Christian love, in the lack of zeal for true mission-work.

As we prepare for the celebration of the centenary of the Saxon immigration, we are bound to make acknowledgments and to utter confessions of a similar nature. For who can be so blind as not to see the growing secularization of the membership of our

Church, the fact that the members of our congregations live in fine and, in part, luxuriously appointed homes, with all modern conveniences, that they own costly cars, which are regularly replaced by newer models, that they invest heavily in life insurance and similar projects, — and all this while the work of the Kingdom is so pitifully neglected? And who would deny that this poison has contaminated also the clergy, that this general lowering of Christian standards is reflected also in the lowering of professional standards? What about the demands, which are becoming more and more insistent, that there be less preaching of justification and more of "practical" sanctification? What about tendencies in teaching and practise that are coming perilously near to the proclaiming and applying of the modern social gospel? What about the insistence upon the letter of resolutions once passed, even though conditions have changed? What about the growing tendency to shorten the instruction for membership in the Church and for admission to the Lord's Supper? What about the specific instruction and examination of those who wish to partake of the Holy Communion? (Cp. Apol. of Conf. *Trigl.*, §§ 1. 49.) What about the growing laxity in many quarters with regard to being conformed to the world, especially in the matter of recreation and amusements? Are orthodoxism and formalism going to present a twin menace to throttle the inner life and growth of the Church? Are we approaching a state of spiritual ossification, when we shall have the name that we are living but in reality are spiritually dead?

What is to be said in particular of the personal attitude of pastors to their exalted office? Is it nothing but malicious slander when members of our congregation complain that some pastors spend more time at the card table or on the golf course than at their study tables, that they neglect important pastoral work because of a bowling match? Are our people speaking in ignorance when they state that many sermons are shallow and superficial, that "pastors hide the nakedness of their thought under the fig-leaf of glibness"? These and other questions we ought to face squarely if we desire to make the period of the centennial celebration one of reconsecration.

Once more we must become more deeply aware of the responsibility connected with the office of the Christian ministry. The noted Lutheran divine Charles Porterfield Krauth, as reported by his pupil Revere Franklin Weidner (*Theological Encyclopedia and Methodology*, I, 36 f.), remarked as follows: "The office of the ministry involves the supremest exercise of man's supremest faculties transfigured by the power of the Holy Ghost. The minister should be deep in the knowledge of that Law [i. e., the Word of God] which underlies all law and thus is to be a deeper lawyer

than the lawyer himself. He should be a true physician, thoroughly understanding men, able to apply the divine remedies for the deepest diseases of the race. He should be a true teacher of that knowledge which is above all human knowledge. His work is the reproduction of the living Christ in the heart. The function of this office embraces all ages and conditions. Into such a profession, so noble, so difficult, so responsible, no man should ever enter unadvisedly." With this estimate of the ministry agrees the declaration of H. B. Smith (*Introduction to Christian Theology*, 23 f.): "If ever the service of the ministry was a mere routine, now it is no longer such. There is no research of scholarship, no philological skill, no power of historical investigation, no mastery in philosophy, no largeness of imagination, no grace of life and character, no practical self-denial, no gift of eloquence to man by the written or the spoken word, no energy of character, no practical sagacity, . . . no living faith, and no large charity which may not, through the length and breadth of our land, find the fullest employment, and which are not needed, by the Christian Church. It wants its men of fire, its men of piety, its men of large discourse, its laborers in our streets and lanes, its minds of calm philosophy, its heroes, and its saints. It needs its trained bands — and needs them in our own country especially — to meet both Pope and pagan."

Few men since the days of the apostles have had such clear comprehension of the dignity and responsibility of the ministerial office as Martin Luther, and we cannot refrain from quoting from one of his great educational classics, namely, from the *Sermon on the Duty of Sending Children to School*. He writes: "We will first consider the subject in its spiritual, or eternal, aspects and afterward in its temporal, or secular, relations. I trust that believers and all who wish to be called Christians understand that the ministerial office was instituted of God, not with gold or silver, but with the precious blood and bitter death of His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. For from His wounds (as is shown in the epistles) truly flow the Sacraments, and His blood has dearly purchased for mankind the blessing of the ministerial office, the function of which is to preach, baptize, loose, bind, dispense the Sacraments, comfort, warn, admonish with God's Word, and do whatever else pertains to the care of souls. Such an office not only promotes temporal life and every secular condition, but it also gives eternal life, releases from death and sin, which is its peculiar and distinguished work; and indeed the world stands and abides only on account of this office, without which it would long since have perished. . . . I mean the clerical office, which pays attention to preaching and the ministration of the Word and



Sacraments, which imparts the Holy Spirit and salvation, blessings not to be obtained by means of music and display; which includes the duties of pastor, teacher, preacher, chaplain, sexton, and schoolmaster, and which is highly praised and extolled in the Scriptures. St. Paul speaks of ministers as the stewards and servants of God, bishops, prophets, and also ambassadors of God to reconcile the world to God, 2 Cor. 5, 20. Joel calls them the Lord's messengers; and Malachi says: 'The priest's lips should keep knowledge; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts,' Mal. 2, 7; as Christ also says, Matt. 11, 10, when He calls John the Baptist a messenger, and also throughout the Book of Revelation. . . . If it is certain and true that God has instituted the office of the ministry with His own blood and death, we may be sure that He desires to have it highly honored and continued till the day of Judgment."

After thus setting forth his appreciation of the ministerial office in the *introduction* of the treatise, Luther follows this up with his customary powerful application, especially with reference to his purpose in writing the "sermon." He writes: "For consider that whatsoever of good is connected with the office of preaching and the care of souls will be accomplished by your son if he is faithful in his ministry, so that through him many souls will be daily taught, converted, baptized, brought to Christ, made blessed, redeemed from sin, death, hell, and the devil, and come to perfect righteousness and eternal life in heaven. Daniel well says: 'They that teach others shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever,' Dan. 12, 3. For since God's Word and office, where they are rightly employed, must always accomplish great things and indeed work miracles, your son will be constantly doing wonderful things for God, such as raising the dead, casting out devils, making the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lepers to be clean, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk. If this is not done in the body, it is done in the soul, which is indeed a greater work, as Christ says John 14, 12: 'He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.' If a simple Christian can do such things in the case of individuals, how much more can a public preacher accomplish, who deals with whole congregations? Not that he does it himself, but his office, which has been instituted of God for that purpose, and the Word of God, which he teaches; for he is but an instrument in the hands of God."

Luther does not hesitate in this connection to speak of the pastor's relation to, and responsibility with reference to, sanctification also in the narrower sense, including the domain of good works in the field of Christian social service, now so called. He says: "We have been speaking of the works and miracles which your son

does in relation to souls, in saving them from sin, death, and the devil. But in relation to the world also he does great and mighty works in that he informs and instructs all classes how they are to discharge their various duties in a manner acceptable to God. He comforts the sorrowing, gives counsel, settles difficulties, calms disturbed consciences, helps to maintain peace, to appease, to reconcile, and similar duties without number; for a preacher confirms, strengthens, and supports all authority, all temporal peace, governs the seditious, teaches obedience, morality, discipline, and honor, and gives instruction in the duties pertaining to fathers, mothers, children, servants, and, in a word, to all secular relations of life. These are, it is true, the least of a pastor's services; yet they are so excellent and noble that the wisest of the heathen philosophers did not recognize or understand them, much less practise them; and no jurist, no university, no cloister, knows of such works, nor are they taught in either ecclesiastical or civil law. For there is no one who recognizes such secular offices as the great gifts or gracious arrangement of God; it is the Word of God and the ministerial office alone that highly praise and honor them. Therefore, if we wish to speak the truth, we must say that temporal peace—the greatest good on earth, in which all other temporal blessings are comprehended—is really a fruit of the ministerial office. For where it perishes, there are found war, hatred, and the shedding of blood; and where it is not properly exercised, we find, if not actual war, at least a constant unrest, a desire for war and bloodshed." (Translation in Painter, *Luther on Education*, 218 ff.; St. Louis Ed., X, 427 ff.; Holman Ed., IV, 142 ff.)

Where is the blame to be laid when such an appreciation of the ministerial office, its opportunities and responsibilities, is absent? Bulletin 11 of the American Association of Theological Schools states that lowered standards are at least in part a matter of lowered ethics. The situation may be accounted for in part by the fact that some pastors did not enter the ministry from adequate motives. As Dr. Krauth suggests, some men are in the ministry although they entered it almost with an aversion. Others are under the constraint of a vow or an earnest wish of a father or a mother or a promise made by themselves in a moment of intense emotion. Still others drift into the ministry by sheer force of circumstances or because they began their preparation for the office and then were ashamed to draw back. All these motives are incompatible with the dignity and purpose of the Christian ministry and are bound to lower the standards of the profession.

But this is only one side of the difficulty, although it will usually give direction to unsatisfactory work in the ministry. Much has been said about raising standards of educational work

within the preparatory schools and the seminaries. But if we merely raise the standards within the seminaries, as the bulletin referred to above states, we shall never completely touch the lowered standards of American pastors. In a survey on *Physicians and Medical Care*, by Esther Lucile Brown (Russell Sage Foundation, 1937), reference is made to the need for systematic post-graduate study on the part of medical practitioners of every kind. Evidently this profession is experiencing the same kind of difficulty, since graduates do not continue their professional training after they have once entered upon the duties of their calling. And yet it is true of every profession what is stated by Bowling, in an article entitled "Getting Educated and Staying Educated," in the *Adult Education Bulletin* of September, 1937: "If it were possible for the schools to send people into the world supplied with glittering prescriptions of how to use unerringly the information they have acquired, then every business man who had been to school would be a successful business man, every professional man a success in his profession. . . . A teacher may outline what he considers the most essential information about a given subject and even suggest how this information may be used, and this suggestion may strike responsive chords in the minds of many of the listeners; but to achieve the best and most enduring results, the person using this knowledge must be able to make his own contribution to it, observable in the way he uses it. Business, industry, and the professions readily supply whatever instances may be necessary to show that the educated mind is better prepared to make this contribution than the untrained mind. . . . Whenever in our intellectual development or technical training we reach the stage at which we consider ourselves educated, then our next big problem is to *stay educated*. A college degree may rightfully be regarded as a badge of learning because it signifies the satisfactory completion of a prescribed program of study. As a badge of learning, however, a degree soon tarnishes if kept from intellectual agitation for too long a time. The person whose knowledge is out of date is much on the order of the driver of a Model T Ford on a superhighway: other drivers in machines of more modern make and design pull around the man in the Model T, leaving him and his outmoded equipment as hazards to the safety and progress of others. Certain aspects of knowledge of course remain constant, but much of the world's knowledge is constantly being changed by the results of new experiments, new findings, new discoveries.\* . . . To stay educated, we must keep

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\* Translated into the circumstances pertaining to the ministry, this would mean that the subject-matter remains the same, but that social conditions and teaching situations are constantly changing.

abreast of ever-changing knowledge as it applies generally and specifically to our particular field of endeavor, and the task is a lifelong process. The adult-education movement in this country as well as abroad has made it a simple matter for educated persons to stay educated if they will but avail themselves of the opportunities offered."

These statements find their application in the evident lowering of professional standards in the matter of continued private study. And let no one raise the objection that the manifold duties connected with the present-day "waiting-on-tables" busyness of the harassed pastor make it impossible for him to continue his professional studies along definite lines. The faithful pastor's appreciation of his divine calling will demand that he give first place on his program to the preparation of his sermons and his Bible-lessons, to his work for his classes in the Catechism and other teaching duties. And this makes it imperative for him to keep on studying lest he become superficial in his work or depend on preaching and teaching helps prepared by others. In his introduction to the postil published by Mag. Joh. Spangenberg Luther writes (XIV, 397): "On the other hand, a number of lazy pastors and preachers are not to be commended, who depend on such and other good books because they can take a sermon therefrom; they do not pray, they do not study, they do not read, they do not seek for anything in the Scriptures, just as if they were not in need of reading the Bible because of these books. Such men use books of this kind like the formularies and calendars, merely in order to earn their food by the year, and are nothing but parrots and jackdaws, which learn to repeat without understanding, although our intention and that of such theologians is to lead them into the Scriptures and to admonish them to be on the alert in order that after our death they may for themselves defend our Christian faith against the devil, world, and flesh. For we shall not stand at the head forever, as we now stand. . . . Therefore the watchword is: Watch, study, *attende lectioni*. Truly, thou canst not do too much reading in the Bible; and what thou redest thou canst not too well read; and what thou redest well thou canst not too well understand; and what thou understandest well, that thou canst not too well teach; and what thou teachest well thou canst not live too well. *Experto crede Ruperto*. It is the devil, it is the world, it is our flesh, which rage and storm against us. Therefore, my dear lords and brethren, pastors and preachers, pray, read, study, be diligent; truly, there is no time to be lazy, to snore and to sleep, in this evil, infamous time. Make use of the gift which is entrusted to you and reveal the mystery of Christ." (St. Louis Ed., XIV, 397 ff.)

In view of the fact that the languages, which are, at least theoretically, considered essential for adequate theological study, are being so widely neglected today and that the professional standards are thus lowered to a most alarming extent, it will be well to consider and reconsider, study and restudy, Luther's earnest appeal in his *Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of all the Cities of Germany* of the year 1524. There we read: "Therefore, my beloved countrymen, let us open our eyes, thank God for this precious treasure, and take pains to preserve it and to frustrate the designs of Satan. For we cannot deny that, although the Gospel has come and daily comes through the Holy Spirit, it has come *by means of the languages* and through them must increase and be preserved. For when God wished through the apostles to spread the Gospel abroad in all the world, He gave the languages for that purpose; and by means of the Roman Empire He made Latin and Greek the language of many lands that this Gospel might speedily bear fruit far and wide. He has done the same now. For a time no one understood why God had revived the study of the languages; but now we see that it was for the sake of the Gospel, which He wished to bring to light and thereby expose and destroy the reign of Antichrist. . . . In the same measure that the Gospel is dear to us should we zealously cherish the languages. For God had a purpose in giving the Scriptures in only two languages, the Old Testament in the Hebrew and the New Testament in the Greek. What God did not despise but chose before all others for His Word we should likewise esteem above all others. . . . And let this be kept in mind, that we will not preserve the Gospel without the languages. The languages are the scabbard in which the Word of God is sheathed. They are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; the cask in which this wine is kept; the chamber in which this food is stored. And, to borrow a figure from the Gospel itself, they are the baskets in which this bread and fish and fragments are preserved. If through neglect we lose the languages (which may God forbid!), we will not only lose the Gospel, but it will finally come to pass that we will lose also the ability to speak and write either Latin or German. . . . With a simple preacher of the faith it is different from what it is with the expositor of the Scriptures, or prophet, as St. Paul calls him. The former has so many clear passages and texts in translations that he is able to understand and preach Christ and lead a holy life. But to explain the Scriptures, to deal with them independently and oppose heretical interpreters, such a one is too weak without a knowledge of the languages. But we need just such expositors who will give themselves to the study and interpretation of the Scriptures and who are able to contro-

vert erroneous doctrines; for a pious life and orthodox teaching are not alone sufficient. Therefore the languages are absolutely necessary, as well as prophets, or expositors; but it is not necessary that every Christian or preacher be such a prophet, according to the diversity of gifts of which St. Paul speaks in 1 Cor. 12, 8, 9 and in Eph. 4, 11. . . . Hence, although faith and the Gospel may be preached by ordinary ministers without the languages, still such preaching is sluggish and weak, and the people finally become weary and fall away. But a knowledge of the languages renders it lively and strong, and faith finds itself constantly renewed through rich and varied instruction." (Tr. in Painter, *Luther on Education*, 184 ff.; cp. St. Louis Ed., X, 470 ff.; Holman Ed., IV, 112 ff.)

Luther was not demanding the impossible when he insisted upon maintaining high standards with reference to the ancient languages in the ministry. Not the least amazing fact in the life of this man, full of unusual experiences as it is, may be found in his being practically self-taught in Greek and Hebrew. In mastering the former language he received some assistance from his friend Johann Lang; but his proficiency in Hebrew was essentially his own accomplishment, although he modestly stated: "I am no Hebrew grammarian, nor do I wish to be, for I cannot bear to be hampered by rules; but I am quite at ease in the language, for whoever has the gift of tongues, even though he cannot forthwith turn anything into another language, yet has a wonderful gift of God." (Smith and Gallinger, *Conversations with Luther*, 182. Cp. St. Louis Ed., XXII, 1542 f.) His knowledge of church history and of philosophical subjects is likewise surprising, and the explanation for this fact may be found, at least in part, in his contacts with other scholars, which is apparent from his voluminous correspondence and the many conferences and meetings which he attended. He not only contributed an amazing amount of material at such meetings, but absorbed at least as much, so that he retained the remarkable elasticity of his mind practically up to the time of his last illness, as his books, treatises, and letters show. This fact might well be kept in mind by many pastoral conferences in our days. What we need is less discussion of peripheral matters and a more thorough study of the Bible and of doctrinal theology. Nor is it sufficient to appoint one or more men as essayists, who will then read papers on subjects of which the rest of the members knew little or nothing beforehand, but the topics should be advertised, at least in outline, to all members of the conference, so that every one present may offer a specific contribution, preferably of a constructive nature, to the discussion of the propositions or theses presented. Scholars in other fields of human knowledge and endeavor find the panel-discussion method exceedingly fruitful; why should it not be more widely introduced into our circles?



And still another point will bear careful study if the lowering of professional standards is not to endanger our scholarship, and that is the professional man's continuation work with the extension division of higher institutions of learning, preferably Lutheran seminaries. Pastors' institutes, summer sessions, correspondence courses — they all, if conscientiously employed, are bound to keep the mind alert and elastic and to offer opportunities for penetrating ever more deeply into the unsearchable mysteries of the grace of God. Bulletin 11 of the American Association of Theological Seminaries, referred to above, rather timidly suggests: "Is it too much to hope that individual seminaries might be willing . . . during the otherwise dormant summer period to pool their faculty resources, rotate the load, so that it would not fall heavily upon individual men, and make possible within the summers . . . opportunities for continued theological education?" (P. 33.) As for us, we need not wait for such projects to eventuate, for the opportunity has been offered in the past and will again be offered to all those who are truly interested and will be ready, if necessary, to make some sacrifices for the sake of maintaining high standards in the profession. The plan ought to be given all the more consideration since it incidentally places the facilities of fairly well-equipped libraries at the disposal of the earnest pastor.

Let us turn once more to Luther, who had such a keen insight into the needs of men in the professional fields. In his *Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen in Behalf of Christian Schools* of 1524 he writes: "My advice is not to collect all sorts of books indiscriminately, thinking only of getting a vast number together. . . . In the first place, a library should contain the Holy Scriptures in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German, and other languages. Then the best and most ancient commentators in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. Secondly, such books as are useful in acquiring the languages, as the poets and orators, without considering whether they are heathen or Christian, Greek or Latin. For it is from such works that grammar must be learned. Thirdly, books treating of all the arts and sciences. Lastly, books on jurisprudence and medicine, though here discrimination is necessary. A prominent place should be given to chronicles and histories, in whatever languages they may be obtained; for they are wonderfully useful in understanding and regulating the course of the world and in disclosing the marvelous works of God. . . . Since God has so graciously and abundantly provided us with art, scholars, and books, it is time for us to reap the harvest and gather for future use the treasures of these golden years." (Tr. by Painter, *op. cit.*, 206 ff. Cp. St. Louis Ed., X, 483 f.; Holman Ed., IV, 128 ff.)

This brief discussion may well close with a few excerpts from:



Luther's *Vorrede ueber den ersten Teil seiner deutschen Buecher* of 1539, where he writes: "In addition to this let me show you a proper way of studying theology, in which I exercised myself. If you observe this, you will become so learned that you yourself could (if that were necessary) provide such good books as the fathers and the councils. . . . And that is the way which the holy King David (and which without doubt was observed by all patriarchs and prophets) teaches in Ps. 119. There you will find three rules, abundantly presented throughout the entire psalm, and they read: *Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*. In the first place you must know that the Holy Scriptures are a book of such a nature as to make the wisdom of all other books foolishness, since only this book teaches concerning eternal life. Therefore you must despair completely regarding your own understanding and penetration; for therewith you will attain to nothing, but by such presumption you will precipitate yourself, and others with you, from heaven into the abyss of hell, as happened to Lucifer. But kneel down in your closet and pray to God with true humility and sincerity that He may, through His dear Son, give you His Holy Spirit that He may illuminate and guide you and give you the proper understanding. . . . In the second place you must meditate, that is, not only in the mind, but also outwardly use and apply, read and reread, the exact statements and the specific words (*buchstabische Worte*) in the Book, with diligent attention and meditation concerning what the Holy Ghost means thereby. And be careful lest you become surfeited or have the idea that one or two readings, with discussion, will be enough, so that you understand it thoroughly; for no worth-while theologian will be developed thus, and they are like unripe fruit which falls from the tree before it is half matured. . . . In the third place there is *tentatio*; that is the touchstone, which will not only teach you to know and understand, but also to experience how right, how true, how sweet, how lovely, how powerful, how comforting, is the Word of God, wisdom above all wisdom. . . . But if you are presumptuous and entertain the notion that you are in full possession of everything and feel flattered about your own booklets, teaching, and writing, as though you had succeeded in a very fine way and preached most excellently; and if it pleases you much that you are praised in the presence of others and possibly even seek such praise, else you would feel mournful and reduce your efforts: if you are of that sort, my dear fellow, then be sure to take hold of your ears, and if you take hold in the right way, you will find a fine pair of large, long, rough ass's ears. Then you may as well complete the job and adorn them with golden bells, so that, wherever you go, men may hear you, point their fingers at you, and

say: Behold, behold, there goes that fine animal that can write such precious books and preach so unusually well. Then you will be blissful and more than blissful in heaven,—yea, in that which is prepared for the devil and his angels. To summarize: Let us seek honor and be as proud as we may. In this book the honor is God's alone, and it is written: *Deus superbis resistit, humilibus autem dat gratiam. Cui est gloria in secula seculorum. Amen.*" (St. Louis Ed., XIV, 434 ff.)

P. E. KRETZMANN

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### St. Paul and Woman's Status \*

Under this heading, in the *Woman's Press* (August, 1937), Hazel E. Foster, administrative dean, Presbyterian College of Education, Chicago, has published an article on the subject of Paul's prohibitions in 1 Cor. 11, 3 ff.; 14, 33 ff. (1 Tim. 2, 11 ff.) relating to the veiling and public speaking of women in church assemblies, which, in adaptation, is offered for further theological study in the *Religious Digest* (October, 1937).

Evidently the article has been read with much interest and at least some approval in wide areas, for no sooner had it appeared than the question was submitted to us whether or not it may be accepted also in our circles as essentially correct and Biblical. The problem, we think, deserves attention, since the question of the veiling and public speaking of women in church assemblies is still causing some pastors considerable vexation of spirit, though perhaps more than enough has been written on the topic in our church periodicals, commentaries, and other publications. As long as the earth will stand, coals, it seems, must be carried to Newcastle and theological discussions repeated in order that truth may have her way and prevail. It is in the spirit of willing, timely service of larger questioning groups that the following notes on the matter are offered here.

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First of all, we readily admit that in Miss Foster's articles there are statements that are not only correct but also most helpful in supplying a proper background and clearing up difficulties which have their source in the peculiar social and religious situation of the Corinthian church. Touching our particular subject, we gladly draw attention to the excellent description of the general importance of the woman's veil in those early times. Miss Foster says:

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\* Cp. Vol. I, 351—359, also IV, 85—95, of this magazine.

"Jewish ladies covered every hair. They had a superstition that, if a single one escaped there was danger that a demon might come and sit upon it. Their head-covering was a badge of modesty. A mother was asked why God had blessed her by making two of her sons high priests. She answered that her ceiling never saw her hair. A Rabbi fined a man the full price of a dowry for undoing the queer head-piece that held a Jewish matron's locks. To appear in Temple or synagog 'uncovered' was unthinkable."

"The missionary understood the field in which he was working. His converts were nearly all Gentiles, and they had to go on living among heathen neighbors. He knew the foul repute of unveiled females in Corinth. They were either slaves, therefore helpless prey, or prostitutes, or both. Athenian wives, we know, had to muffle up almost to suffocation. If they failed to do so, outside their apartments, they were subject to divorce and forbidden to remarry. It was taken for granted that they had meant to lure men.

"The younger Pliny, Paul's near contemporary, was very proud of the enthusiasm his girl wife, Calpurnia, showed when he read his poems to an applauding crowd, but he makes it plain that she always kept in hiding behind a curtain. Certainly, the safety of Corinthian church women and the good name of the church itself depended on their conformity to this custom of veiling. This is true in the Near East today. I remember Jane Addams's saying to me, 'I didn't wonder why Paul had them veil after I visited Egypt.' I found Christian women covering closely on their way to the Luxor mission-church, while Mohammedan women were most strict in veiling. Bare faces for women in the Near East are far more shocking to many than bare feet would be in the West."

"It is interesting to run through writings of intellectuals in and near Paul's time to catch *their* thoughts about women. Except for certain Stoics the opinion ran pretty low. Pliny was popular with superior women, true, and generous toward them; yet he could not believe that his friend's wife could have written the classic letter her husband claimed for her. He concluded that, if she did, her husband must have taught her; so the credit was still his.

"Plutarch was a chivalrous gentleman and a noble husband. He and his wife belonged to the same philosophical coterie and the same mystery cult. They collaborated in the education of their sons. But he wrote to a young bride friend that a woman ought to speak only to her husband and through him and that female speech suggested immodesty. Incidentally he explained that, where 'two hearts beat as one,' a single pocketbook is best and that it is fitting he should carry it even if she contributed it. Horace, Martial, Lucretius, are among classic writers who might be quoted to similar purpose, while Juvenal devotes an entire satire to biting censure of the whole sex, most virulently against those who like to express opinions."

Miss Foster concludes her apology of Paul's attitude toward women as follows:

"So, after all, if one must hate St. Paul because of his letter to Corinth, one must hate also all the ancient world. In compari-

son with the men about him, Jews, Romans, Greeks, he was a bold pioneer, a veritable radical, in advancing feminine life socially and religiously far beyond his period."

We quote these paragraphs because they present valuable material for understanding Paul's instructions regarding the veiling and public speaking of women in church assemblies. We admit that the excerpts ought to convince and put to silence many superficial critics of the apostle who condemn him without having thoroughly studied all circumstances that moved him to write as he did, and that not of his own accord, but by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. But just the latter fact Miss Foster also either forgets or else refuses to acknowledge because perhaps she does not believe in the divine inspiration of the Bible. For this reason we cannot accept her entire presentation of the matter as sound and reliable, but must offer serious objections to many of her views and verdicts.

## 2

While Miss Foster, to some extent at least, defends Paul, she throughout her argumentation refuses to give him that credit which he deserves as an inspired apostle of Jesus Christ, whose word is authoritative in the Church. She for instance, declares that Paul forbade the unveiling of women "because he was a Jew." Now, it is indeed true that Paul in doing his great apostolic work took into consideration Jewish customs and prejudices; he himself declares: "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew that I might gain the Jews," 1 Cor. 9, 20. But to contend that his injunction against unveiling was actuated by racial or national prejudices means to deny the apostolic character of his epistles. Let it be understood that it was not Paul the *man* or the *Jew* who wrote First Corinthians but "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God," 1 Cor. 1, 1. This solemn exordium of the epistle not only identifies Paul as an apostle of Jesus Christ, who had a right to compose authoritative letters; but it also shows that the entire epistle belongs to that peculiar category of sacred writings which in their entirety make up the Holy Bible, the only source, rule, and standard of Christian faith and life. If Paul wrote First Corinthians as a called apostle of Jesus Christ, then this letter is an integral part of the "foundation of the apostles and prophets" upon which believers are built (Eph. 2, 20), that is to say, which is God's inspired Word given by His appointed apostles and prophets. This fact we must not forget whenever we examine the passages in question. Here (as elsewhere in his letters) not Paul, but the Holy Spirit speaks to us. Here not a man, but God Himself gives us most necessary directions. Here, if we criticize Paul, we criticize God Himself and thus commit the offense of lese-majesty. This important truth has been frequently

forgotten not only in rationalistic sectarian circles, but of late even in Lutheran quarters. No matter, how anything in Scripture may strike our conceited and rebellious reason, we must bear in mind that God in the Holy Bible is revealing to us His own divine Word, which is to be called the "power of God and the wisdom of God," 1 Cor. 1, 24, even if it is to those who are in the process of perishing sheer absurdity (v. 23).

Miss Foster, moreover, is wrong in claiming that the apostle did not forbid public preaching by women. She writes: "The apostle did not tell these women they must not preach. Prophesying was the most important kind of preaching. But he did insist that they must not remove their veils to do it." This statement does not do justice to the text, for while Paul in 1 Cor. 11 treats only of the veiling of the women in church assemblies, he very definitely and categorically forbids preaching by women in 1 Cor. 14, 33 ff. and 1 Tim. 2, 11 ff. There are two plausible reasons why Paul in 1 Cor. 11 may not have *expressis verbis* forbidden public preaching by women in this connection. The first is that Paul, as a wise master builder (1 Cor. 3, 10), attended to first things first, dealing in chap. 11 merely with the trouble facing him just then. At any rate, he places very strong emphasis on the matter of veiling, stating that "every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head; for that is even all one as if she were shaven," 1 Cor. 11, 5. Furthermore, this prophesying by women was not the ordinary public preaching and teaching but something that represented a special gift of the Holy Spirit, a charismatic endowment. If by God's special dispensation women in Corinth were at times called upon to foretell future events or in any other way to manifest and declare God's special revelation, Paul, who never permitted the Spirit to be quenched (1 Thess. 5, 19), certainly would not interfere in this case. However, such prophesying was not that common preaching which is very definitely forbidden to women in the passages mentioned before. In those Bible-verses the apostle speaks so clearly that no honest Bible student has any right to say: "The apostle did not tell these women they must not preach. But he did insist that they must not remove their veils to do it." Such exegesis is very manifestly unfair and untextuary.

Lastly also Miss Foster is wrong in reproving the apostles for giving a religious reason "for stopping an annoying breach of etiquette and a risky defiance of convention." Her *ipsissima verba* read: "It may seem a pity that he gave a religious reason for stopping an annoying breach of etiquette and a risky defiance of convention. But he was too rabbinic to resist." One religious reason alluded to is expressed by St. Paul as follows: "For a man

indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man," 1 Cor. 11, 7. In a sense Paul's entire argument is religious, for it moves within the sphere of Christian ethics. However, that is not a pity, but something which is entirely natural and proper. Are not all actions of Christians in the final analysis directed by religious motives? It is only if we entirely separate Christian ethics from the Christian religion that we must leave religion out of consideration where the discussion centers about some ethical behavior problem. The trouble with Miss Foster's interpretation is that she always divorces the man Paul from the apostle St. Paul and makes him speak as an ordinary human teacher and not from divine inspiration. Thus also when, referring to Paul's injunction in Gal. 3, 28, she says of him: "When he wrote to the Galatians, he was doubtless thanking God that he had outgrown these three superiorities (of man over woman). But like his parishioners, this minister could not escape his past at once altogether. He had always heard women, children, and slaves mentioned as one class, above which men towered." Why this exegetical comment, which neither is true nor clarifies the situation as it confronts us at Corinth? Miss Foster should not overlook the very first principle of good Scripture exegesis — the pious submission of one's reason to God's Word as the only norm and guide of all Christian teaching. No, we cannot accept Miss Foster's apology as in every part satisfactory, though the purely historical matters which she adduces in explanation of the Corinthian problem help the reader to understand certain features of the social and religious Corinthian background. She is wrong, for example, in claiming that Paul forbade only the unveiling and not the public preaching by women. She is wrong (partly at least) also in attributing Paul's injunction against unveiling to his Jewish prejudices. She is essentially right of course in ascribing the command against the unveiling of women also to the offense which it caused in the ancient Greek and Jewish world.

## 3

With that, however, we dare not let the matter rest, for there is still a point in the discussion to be cleared up, a vital point, which Miss Foster in her apology passes by with a *quasi* shrug of the shoulder. Speaking of a very orthodox Christian woman, she writes: "She was certain that, if the Apostle Paul had told his feminine congregation to keep on their veils, no woman in all the centuries thereafter must ever appear in church without one." Well, after all, was not that Christian woman of whom Miss Foster speaks, right? Certainly, we as believing Christians would have to forbid the unveiling of women in church assemblies (*as do the*



*Romanists still*) if the unveiling of women would lie on the same moral level as their public speaking or preaching. But does it not? What right have we today to forbid public preaching by women when we permit public unveiling by women at church? Are not the Romanists much more consistent than we are on this point? In both cases, as Miss Foster remarks, Paul uses religious arguments to oppose the offensive practise of the Corinthian wrongdoers. What difference is there between the religious arguments of Paul which permit us today to allow the unveiling while we insist upon the "keeping of silence by women in the churches"? Certainly it is and always has been our Lutheran practise that we permitted the unveiling and yet prohibited the public speaking by women. What entitles us to make this distinction?

It is manifestly the right view of the matter in question that Paul forbade the unveiling by women in church assemblies in consideration of the significance of the veil at that time among Jews and Gentiles and the great offense therefore given by those who discarded the covering. Miss Foster fitly calls attention to the fact that "in the synagog women were kept apart in a gallery or the rear of the room. They were permitted very little part in the responses. If mothers and wives did make the long journey to the Temple, they had to keep to the court of the women, on a lower level and farther from the priestly ministries than their husbands and sons." Now, no doubt Christian women were not treated with the same extreme severity as were their Jewish or Gentile sisters, since, very naturally, Paul's ennobling and elevating teachings concerning woman's spiritual status in Gal. 3, 28, as also in 1 Cor. 11, 11 ("Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord"), were soon followed by favorable social reactions. At any rate, we may argue that the Christian women at Corinth must have moved even in church assemblies with considerable freedom since otherwise they would not have gone so far as casting aside the veil altogether. The apostle, it seems, was dealing with an emancipated class of women who listened only to the most urgent arguments, insisting that their religious freedom, their spiritual equality with the man, or their being one with the man in the Lord, entitled them to the same prerogatives which their sons and husbands, at any rate, the Christian men at Corinth, enjoyed. From the warmth and even severity of Paul's arguments it is patent that he was facing a critical situation and that only the most telling proofs of his contentions would strike home. Mere appeals to what was customary or conventional would not have sufficed in this instance, where perhaps also the accused women appealed to religion to justify their arrogated freedom.



Thus the apostle was led to argue his case a) from the headship of the man over the woman, b) from the dishonor attaching to the woman who unveiled herself, c) from her social station as the glory of the man, d) from the immediate nuptial purpose of the woman which prompted God to create her as a helpmeet of the man, e) from the admonitory example of the angels, who in deference to their Maker veil themselves in His presence, f) from the fact that God had endowed her with long hair to serve as a glory to her, and g) from the custom of the churches of God—all either religious or semireligious reasons for “stopping an annoying breach of etiquette and a risky defiance of convention.” And very good and convincing reasons these are; they suffered no contradiction. “If any man seem to be contentious,” says the apostle in conclusion, “we have no such custom, neither the churches of God,” 1 Cor. 11, 16.

However, as we group and analyze these arguments, we discover that, in comparison with those by which Paul prohibited the public preaching of women in church assemblies, they are lacking that cogent absoluteness, or finality, which we find in Paul's other injunctions. In no way does St. Paul here say: “It is *not permitted* unto them to unveil,” or: “They are *commanded* to veil,” or: “as also saith the Law;” or: “If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual (in this matter), let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14, 34 ff.); or: “I *suffer not* a woman to unveil, nor to usurp authority over the man,” etc. (1 Tim. 2, 11 ff.). A close comparison of the two sets of “religious reasons” will clearly show that in the one instance the apostle is arguing in favor of recognized convention and Christian propriety, while in the other he is arguing for obedience to an absolute command of God, which must be observed not merely at Corinth, but universally and for all times wherever Christian church assemblies occur. Paul's weighty verdict: “as also saith the Law,” decides this issue with absolute finality. When Paul forbade women to preach publicly in church assemblies, he was urging upon the Corinthians and other Christians (cf. 1 Tim. 2, 11 ff.) a command of the *Moral Law*, which is in force till the end of time. This, however, he did not do when he urged the Corinthian women to retain the custom of veiling.

All this must be observed in order that one may have a clear view of this complex and difficult problem. While Paul *absolutely* forbade the public preaching by women, he forbade their unveiling only *relatively*, viz., in view of the offense that was given to the Christian cause by the discarding of the veil. Today the veil no longer plays any decisive role in our Western conventions. It is downright immaterial whether a woman veils or unveils, whether

she comes to church with or without a covering. Neither the veiling nor the unveiling presents her to the Lord, to speak in Paul's own expressions. Under no circumstance is any offense given either within the church or without by the presence or the absence of the veil. For this reason we allow our Christian women the utmost freedom in this matter, while at the same time we forbid them to preach in our church assemblies. But strange to say, our present-day Christian women, or at least the overwhelming majority of Christian women today, prefer to come to church with their heads covered; for of their own accord they follow the apostle's sensible and psychologically sound directions, although admittedly he is here not laying down a law binding for all time.

## 4

So, then, we cannot agree to Miss Foster's principal presentations and views. Contrary to her opinion, we must hold that Paul did forbid women to preach in church. And contrary to her opinion, we must hold also that, when he insisted upon the use of the veil, he did this not as a prejudiced Jew, whose religious and moral makeup was too "rabbinic" to do anything else, but as the inspired apostle of Jesus Christ, who also in this case acted by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, teaching his Christian converts of Jewish and Greek extraction God's own precious Word and will. If we no longer insist upon the veiling of women in church assemblies, it is because the text itself convinces us that this prohibition of the apostle was meant only for those times when public unveiling meant arousing suspicions both within the Church and without. And the sin of giving offense was indeed a most serious matter to the great, godly apostle, who a few chapters before had written to the Corinthians: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend," 1 Cor. 8, 13. Through the knowledge of the strong Corinthian Christians, that is to say, through their abuse or injudicious misuse of their Christian liberty, not a single weak brother was to perish, since for him Christ had died. (Cf. 1 Cor. 8, 11.) So much was at stake also in this case, and from this viewpoint it is easy enough to understand why the apostle so strongly inveighed against the nuisance and presumption involved in the casting aside of the veil, the symbol of honor, refinement, and chastity of all decent women at Paul's time. And for us today, who also live in a Corinthian environment, while the accidental feature regarding the veil has changed, the principle still holds. And it is an important principle even for us today. Paul himself summed it up most wonderfully in this same epistle to the Corinthians in the stirring words: "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatso-

ever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offense, neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles nor to the Church of God, even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit but the profit of many, that they may be saved," 1 Cor. 10, 31—33. Strong words indeed, written by a holy apostle through whom the Holy Spirit Himself speaks to us!

J. THEODORE MUELLER

## Abgötterei unter dem Volk Israel im Alten Testament

„Es ist das Herz ein trögig und verzagt Ding; wer kann es ergründen?“ Diese Frage des Herrn durch den Propheten Jeremias, Kap. 17, 9, kennzeichnet nicht nur die natürliche Anlage und Neigung des menschlichen Herzens, sondern auch die volle Entwicklung dieses Dichtens und Trachtens in den Dingen, die zu seinem Unheil dienen. Und es gibt wohl kein anderes Volk, dessen Geschichte in demselben Maße trotz erfahrener göttlicher Güte und Barmherzigkeit die Neigung zu Aberglauben, Bilderdienst und Götzendienst zeigt wie das Volk Israel im Alten Testament. Auch diese Tatsache sollen wir uns zur Warnung gesagt sein lassen, „auf welche das Ende der Welt kommen ist“, 1 Kor. 10, 11. Sehen wir uns einmal kurz die Geschichte dieser Abgötterei und verwandter Sünden an, und achten wir sodann auf die Hauptgötzen, mit denen sich Israel verunreinigte.

Wollen wir die Geschichte der Abgötterei im Alten Testament in einigen Strichen zeichnen, so beginnen wir am besten mit der Bemerkung Josuas in seiner Abschiedsrede an das Volk Israel, wo er spricht: „Eure Väter wohnten vorzeiten jenseits des Wassers, Tharah, Abrahams und Nahors Vater, und dienten andern Göttern. Da nahm ich euren Vater Abraham jenseit des Wassers und ließ ihn wandern im ganzen Lande Kanaan“, Jos. 24, 2. 3. Also noch bei Lebzeiten Noahs und Sems, im achten Geschlecht, war die Abgötterei so eingerissen, daß Gott eine definitive Scheidung vornahm.\*) Abraham hat sich von der Abgötterei seines Großvaters und seines Vaters losgerissen, während der andere Teil der Familie, Nahor mit seinem Sohne Bethuel und seinem Großsohn Laban, am Götzendienst festhielten. Es wird uns berichtet, daß, wo immer Abram (später Abraham) hinkam, er einen Altar baute und von dem Namen des Herrn predigte, Gen. 12, 7. 8; 13, 4. 18; 21, 33. Und von Isaak und Jakob wird uns dasselbe berichtet, Gen. 26, 25; 33, 20; 35, 7.

Und doch berührt es merkwürdig, daß Rahel, die doch mit Lea, wie es scheint, den Gott Jakobs angenommen hatte, Gen. 31, 16, ihres Vaters Gözen stahl, B. 19. 34. Diese Hausgötter (תַּרְמִים) scheinen die-

\*) Nach biblischer Chronologie starb Noah im Jahre 2006 nach der Erschaffung der Welt, Nahor schon im Jahre 1997. Tharah lebte noch 127 Jahre mit Noah zusammen.

selbe Bedeutung gehabt zu haben wie die Heiligenbilder der griechisch-katholischen und der römisch-katholischen Kirche. Wahrscheinlich hatte Jakob besonders diese Gößenbilder im Sinn, als er vor dem Auszug seiner Karawane nach Bethel den Befehl gab: „Tut von euch die fremden Götter, so unter euch sind“, Gen. 35, 2. In diesem Falle braucht Moses den Ausdruck הַמַּלְאָכִים הַנִּזְכָּרִים, womit er anzeigt, daß der Erzbater selbst diese Art des Gößendienstes bestimmt verworfen hat.

Die Geschichte berichtet uns von keinen weiteren Versündigungen dieser Art in den Familien der Patriarchen. Aber daß das Volk Israel während seines ägyptischen Aufenthaltes wenigstens zum Teil durch den ägyptischen Gößendienst beeinflusst wurde, scheint aus der Predigt Stephanus, Apost. 7, 42 f., hervorzugehen (vgl. Amos 5, 25 f.) sowie aus der Tatsache, daß der Stierjehbedienst im Falle des goldenen Kalbes wahrscheinlich mit dem Apiskult Ägyptens (vielleicht auch dem des Gottes Ra oder des Set) in Verbindung zu bringen ist. Auch der unglückliche Zwischenfall mit dem moabitischen Gößen Baal=Peor wirft ein Licht auf die Herzenshärteigkeit der Kinder Israel, Num. 25, 2—5.

Es läßt sich leicht verstehen, warum das Volk Israel am Ende der Jahre, die es auf die Eroberung des Gelobten Landes verwandte, von solchem Eifer für Gott erfüllt war, daß es selbst bei dem Verdacht, als hätten die Rubeniter, die Gaditer und der halbe Stamm Manasse einem falschen Gott einen Altar errichtet, in heißen Zorn geriet und sofort Anstalten traf, die vermeintlich Schuldigen zu strafen, Jos. 22. Aber schon gleich zu Anfang der Richterzeit wurde es offenbar, daß die Kinder Israel in der Aufrechterhaltung des wahren Gottesdienstes sehr bald lau und kalt wurden. Mußte Gott ihnen doch schon kurz nach dem Tode Josuas zurufen: „Ich sprach, ich wollte meinen Bund mit euch nicht nachlassen ewiglich, daß ihr nicht solltet einen Bund machen mit den Einwohnern dieses Landes und ihre Altäre zerbrechen. Aber ihr habt meiner Stimme nicht gehorcht. Warum habt ihr das getan?“ Richt. 2, 1. 2. Aber es kam bald noch schlimmer; denn nicht nur verschwägerten sich die Kinder Israel mit den zurückgebliebenen Einwohnern des Landes, sondern sie dienten auch den Göttern der Heiden „und taten übel vor dem HErrn und vergaßen des HErrn, ihres Gottes und dienten Baalim und den Hainen“, Richt. 3, 7. Und so geht es durch vier Jahrhunderte hindurch. Die Kinder Israel taten übles vor dem HErrn, Kap. 3, 12; 4, 1; 6, 1, so daß augenscheinlich im ganzen Lande Altäre zu Ehren Baals errichtet wurden wie zur Zeit der Berufung Gideons zum Richteramt, Richt. 6, 25. Nicht lange nach Gideons Tode wird uns wieder berichtet: „Aber die Kinder Israel taten fürder übel vor dem HErrn und dienten Baalim und Aitharoth und den Göttern zu Syrien und den Göttern zu Sidon und den Göttern Moabs und den Göttern der Kinder Ammon und den Göttern der Philister und verließen den HErrn und dienten ihm nicht“, Kap. 10, 6. Zwei volle Kapitel des Richterbuchs erzählen uns von Michas Gößendienst (Kap. 17 und 18), auf den

wir unten näher eingehen werden. Es ist bezeichnend genug, daß der Schreiber dieses Buchs wiederholt bemerkt: „Zu der Zeit war kein König in Israel, und ein jeglicher tat, was ihn recht dachte“, Kap. 17, 6; 18, 1; 21, 25.

Sehen wir uns ferner kurz die Könige Judas an, von denen wenigstens einige in den Fußtapfen Davids wandelten, so daß sechs von ihnen (Assa, Josaphat, Asia, Jotham, Hiskia und Josia) das Zeugnis bekamen, daß sie taten, was dem Herrn wohl gefiel. Leider wird aber schon von Salomo, dessen Regierungsantritt so vielversprechend war und der wenigstens den größten Teil seines Lebens dem Dienst des wahren Gottes ergeben war, schließlich berichtet: „Da er nun alt war, neigten seine Weiber sein Herz fremden Göttern nach. . . . Also wandelte Salomo Astarte, dem Gott derer von Sidon, nach, und Milkom, dem Greuel der Ammoniter. . . . Da bauete Salomo eine Höhe Ramos, dem Greuel der Moabiter, auf dem Berge, der vor Jerusalem liegt, und Molech, dem Greuel der Ammoniter“, 1 Kön. 11, 4—7. Unter der Regierung Rehabeams geschah, was 1 Kön. 14, 22. 23 und 2 Chron. 12, 14 geschrieben steht: „Juda tat, das dem Herrn übel gefiel, und reizten ihn zu Eifer, mehr denn alles, das ihre Väter getan hatten mit ihren Sünden, die sie taten. Denn sie baueten ihnen auch Höhen, Säulen und Säime [Mähera=Idole] auf allen hohen Hügeln und unter allen grünen Bäumen.“ Auch von Rehabeams Sohn und Nachfolger, Abia, wird gesagt: „Er wandelte in allen Sünden seines Vaters, die er vor ihm getan hatte, und sein Herz war nicht rechtschaffen an dem Herrn, seinem Gott, wie das Herz seines Vaters David“, 1 Kön. 15, 3.

Auf zwei gute Könige, Assa und Josaphat, folgte leider Joram, von dem gesagt wird: „Er wandelte auf dem Wege der Könige Israels, wie das Haus Ahab tat“, 2 Kön. 8, 18. Auch von seinem Sohn und Nachfolger, Ahasja, wird berichtet: „Er wandelte auch in den Wegen des Hauses Ahab; denn seine Mutter hielt ihn dazu, daß er gottlos war“, 2 Chron. 22, 3. Von Joas sagt die Schrift, daß er auf den Wegen des Herrn wandelte, solange der Priester Jojada lebte. Aber nach dem Tode Joadas „kamen die Obersten in Juda und beteten den König an; da gehorchte ihnen der König. Und sie verließen das Haus des Herrn, des Gottes ihrer Väter, und dienten den Säimen und Höhen“, 2 Chron. 24, 18. Dem Könige Amasia zollt die Schrift zunächst Lob, daß er tat, was dem Herrn wohlgefiel; aber es wird sofort hinzugefügt: „Doch nicht von ganzem Herzen.“ Und dann wird berichtet: „Da Amasia wiederkam von der Edomiter Schlacht, brachte er die Götter der Kinder von Seir und stellte sie ihm zu Göttern und betete an vor ihnen und räucherete ihnen“, 2 Chron. 25, 14.

Nun brach für das Reich Juda auf ein Jahrhundert eine glücklichere Zeit an. Assa sowohl wie Jotham wandelte auf den Wegen Davids und diente dem wahren Gott. Ahas aber zeigte sich als ein Aufrehrer gegen Jehobah (Jahve). Er „wandelte in den Wegen der

Könige Israels. Dazu machte er gegossene Bilder Baalim; und räucherte im Tal der Kinder Hinnom und verbrannte seine Söhne mit Feuer nach dem Greuel der Heiden . . .; und opferte und räucherte auf den Höhen und auf den Hügeln und unter allen grünen Bäumen“, 2 Chron. 28, 2—4. Sein Sohn Schemasja oder Salsja gehörte wieder zu den Königen, von denen gesagt wird, daß sie taten, was dem HErrn wohl gefiel. Unter Manasse aber gestaltete sich die Sachlage wieder kritisch. Er „lehrete sich um und baute die Höhen, die sein Vater Salsja abgebrochen hatte, und stiftete Baalim Altäre und machte Saine und betete an allerlei Heer am Himmel und dienete ihnen. . . . Und baute Altäre allerlei Heer am Himmel in beiden Höfen am Hause des HErrn. . . . Er setzte auch Bilder und Götzen, die er machen ließ, ins Haus Gottes. . . . Manasse verführte Juda und die zu Jerusalem, daß sie ärger taten denn die Heiden, die der HErr vor den Kindern Israel verurteilt hatte“, 2 Chron. 33, 3 ff. Allerdings tat er später Buße und „tat weg die fremden Götter und die Götzen aus dem Hause des HErrn und alle Altäre, die er gebauet hatte auf dem Berge des Hauses des HErrn und zu Jerusalem“; aber es war ihm unmöglich, allen Schaden zu heilen, und sein Sohn Amon folgte seinem früheren Beispiel „und tat, was dem HErrn übel gefiel, wie sein Vater Manasse getan hatte. Und Amon opferte allen Götzen, die sein Vater Manasse gemacht hatte, und dienete ihnen“, 2 Chron. 35, 22.

Unter den letzten Königen Judas wird nur von Josia berichtet, daß er „tat, das dem HErrn wohl gefiel, und wandelte in den Wegen seines Vaters David und wich weder zur Rechten noch zur Linken“, 2 Chron. 34, 2. Die übrigen Könige aber, Joahas, Eliahim oder Jojakim, Jojakim und Zedekia, gehörten sämtlich in die Klasse derer, die taten, das dem HErrn übel gefiel. Die Sachlage wird kurz charakterisiert in den Worten des Chronisten: „Auch alle Obersten unter den Priestern samt dem Volk machten des Sündigens viel nach allerlei Greuel der Heiden und verunreinigten das Haus des HErrn, das er geheiligt hatte zu Jerusalem“, 2 Chron. 36, 14.

Wenden wir uns nun zum Lande der nördlichen Stämme, so wird das Bild, das uns die Schrift zeichnet, noch dunkler. Schon der Gründer des Reichtumsreiches, Jerobeam I., legte den Grund zu einer schändlichen Abgötterei. Weil er fürchtete, daß sich sein Volk wieder dem südlichen Reich zuwenden würde, wenn seine Untergebenen jährlich etliche Male, zur Zeit der großen Feste, nach Jerusalem wanderten, „machte er zwei goldene Kälber und sprach zu ihnen: Es ist euch zu viel, hinauf gen Jerusalem zu gehen; siehe, da sind deine Götter, Israel, die dich aus Ägyptenland geführt haben“, 1 Kön. 12, 28. Dies ist die Sünde Jerobeams, damit er Israel sündigen machte; denn dadurch richtete er einen Götzendienst an, der sich durch die ganze Geschichte Israels hindurch behauptete und schließlich zum Untergang des nördlichen Reiches führte. Was der HErr über das Vorgehen Jerobeams urteilte, ist klar angezeigt



in den Worten: „Du hast übel getan über alle, die vor dir gewesen sind, bist hingegangen und hast dir andere Götter gemacht und gegossene Bilder, daß du mich zu Zorn reiztest, und hast mich hinter deinen Rücken geworfen“, 1 Kön. 14, 9. Es ist bedeutungsvoll, daß „die Sünde Jerobeams, damit er Israel sündigen machte“, stehender Ausdruck für die Abgötterei Israels wurde. Die Beschreibung Nadabs beginnt mit den Worten: „Und tat, das dem Herrn übel gefiel, und wandelte in dem Wege seines Vaters und in seiner Sünde, damit er Israel hatte sündigen gemacht“, 1 Kön. 15, 26. Dieselbe beurteilende Beschreibung wird gebraucht von Baesa, 1 Kön. 15, 34, von Simri, Kap. 16, 19, von Omri, Kap. 16, 25 f., von Ahasja, Kap. 22, 53. 54, von Joram, 2 Kön. 3, 3, von Jehu, Kap. 10, 29, von Joahas, Kap. 13, 2, von Joas, Kap. 13, 11, von Jerobeam II., Kap. 14, 24, von Sacharja, Kap. 15, 9, von Menahem, Kap. 15, 18, von Pekahja, Kap. 15, 24, von Pekah, Kap. 15, 28. Nur von dem letzten Könige, Hosea, wird berichtet: „Und tat, das dem Herrn übel gefiel, doch nicht wie die Könige Israel, die vor ihm waren“, Kap. 17, 2. Der schlimmste Götzendiener unter den Königen Israels war Ahab, von dem geschrieben steht: „Und war ihm ein Geringes, daß er wandelte in der Sünde Jerobeams, des Sohns Nebats, und nahm dazu Isebel, die Tochter Ethbaals, des Königs zu Sidon, zum Weibe und ging hin und diente Baal und betete ihn an. Und richtete Baal einen Altar auf im Hause Baals, das er ihm baute zu Samaria. Und machte einen Hain, daß Ahab mehr tat, den Herrn, den Gott Israels, zu erzürnen, denn alle Könige Israels, die vor ihm gewesen waren“, 1 Kön. 16, 31—33. Die ganze Geschichte der Abgötterei Israels wird zusammengefaßt in die Worte: „Die Kinder Israel schmückten ihre Sachen wider den Herrn, ihren Gott, die doch nicht gut waren, nämlich daß sie ihnen Höhen bauten in allen Städten, beide in Schlössern und festen Städten und richteten Säulen auf und Haine auf allen hohen Hügeln und unter allen grünen Bäumen und räuchereten daselbst auf allen Höhen wie die Heiden, die der Herr vor ihnen weggetrieben hatte, und trieben böse Stücke, damit sie den Herrn erzürneten, und dienten den Götzen, davon der Herr zu ihnen gesagt hatte: Ihr sollt solches nicht tun“, 2 Kön. 17, 9—12. Es ist klar, daß die Hauptsünde des Volkes, und zwar nicht ausschließlich Israels, sondern auch Judas, die Abgötterei war, womit sich selbstverständlich in den meisten Fällen die Sünde der Hurerei verband.

Mit diesen Ausführungen in den historischen Büchern des Alten Testaments stimmt überein, was wir in den Propheten lesen und auch vielen Stellen in den Psalmen entnehmen können, namentlich denen, die nach der Zeit Davids gedichtet worden sind. Im achten Jahrhundert v. Chr., kurz vor dem Fall des nördlichen Reiches, wies der Herr durch den Propheten Hosea auf die Tatsache hin, daß die Kinder Israel sich zu fremden Göttern kehrten, Kap. 3, 1. Etwa um dieselbe Zeit schrieb der Prophet Jesaias seine gewaltigen Weissagungen, in denen er auch



unter anderm den Götzendienst geißelte, wie er damals leider auch in Juda eingedrungen war; vgl. Kap. 42, 17; 43, 12, und besonders 44, 7—20. Mit beißender Ironie zeichnet der Prophet den Unverstand der Götzemacher, um dann als Gegensatz die einzigartige Stellung des wahren Gottes hervorzuheben. Sein Zeitgenosse Micha, der gegen Samaria und Jerusalem voraussagte, schreibt kurz und klar: „Alle ihre Götzen sollen zerbrochen, und all ihr Hurenlohn soll mit Feuer verbrannt werden, und will alle ihre Bilder verwüsten; denn sie sind von Hurenlohn versammelt und sollen auch wieder Hurenlohn werden“, Kap. 1, 7. Der Prophet Jeremias weist wiederholt auf den Götzendienst hin, der sein Volk ins Verderben zu stürzen drohte, wie wenn er warnt und klagt: „Wo sind aber denn deine Götter, die du dir gemacht hast? Heiß sie aufstehen! Laß sehen, ob sie dir helfen können in der Not. Denn so manche Stadt, so manchen Gott hast du, Juda“, Kap. 2, 28; vgl. 5, 7; 16, 18—20. Zephania, ein Zeitgenosse des Jeremias, redet von der Abgötterei Moabs, die auch das Volk Gottes angesteckt hatte, Kap. 2, 11. Auch Habakuk, der etwa um dieselbe Zeit lebte, hat eine lebhaft ironische Beschreibung des Götzendienstes, wie er sich nicht nur bei den Babyloniern seiner Zeit, sondern auch in Juda fand: „Was wird dir dann helfen das Bild, das sein Meister gebildet hat, und das falsche gegossene Bild, darauf sich verläßt sein Meister, daß er stumme Götzen machte? Wehe dem, der zum Holz spricht: Wache auf! und zum stummen Stein: Stehe auf! Wie sollt es lehren? Siehe, es ist mit Gold und Silber überzogen, und ist kein Odem in ihm“, Kap. 2, 18, 19. Noch zu Anfang des sechsten Jahrhunderts v. Chr., als schon viele Einwohner Judas ins Exil gewandert waren, zeigte Gott dem Propheten Hesekeel, wie die Kinder Israel, ihre Ältesten an der Spitze, Abgötterei der schlimmsten Art trieben, Kap. 8, 3—16.

Wie in den Propheten, so finden sich auch im Psalter, wie oben erwähnt, Sinweise und Verurteilungen der Abgötterei jeder Art, besonders in ihrer größten Form. Wiederholt wird das Volk Gottes vor Abgötterei gewarnt (z. B. Ps. 81, 10; 97, 7); aber die ausführlichste Beschreibung des Unverständes, der mit dem Götzendienst verbunden war, findet sich Ps. 115, 4—7 und 135, 15—18, die Parallelen sind. Da spricht der Herr: „Jener Götzen sind Silber und Gold, von Menschenhänden gemacht. Sie haben Mäuler und reden nicht; sie haben Augen und sehen nicht; sie haben Ohren und hören nicht; sie haben Nasen und riechen nicht; sie haben Hände und greifen nicht; Füße haben sie und gehen nicht; und reden nicht durch ihren Hals.“ Der Zusammenhang zeigt, daß durch eine solche sarkastische Beschreibung der falschen Götter das Volk Gottes gewarnt werden sollte.

Eine besonders auffällige Erscheinung im Alten Testament ist der immer wieder zutage tretende Synkretismus im Volke Gottes. Wie es scheint, war das Volk Israel oft so unverständlich, daß es meinte, es könne den wahren Gott unter Bildern mancherlei Art verehren oder seinen

Dienst mit demjenigen falscher Götter verbinden. Dies war wahrscheinlich schon in der Wüste der Fall, als das Volk Aaron aufforderte: „Auf und mach uns Götter, die vor uns hergehen!“ Ex. 32, 1. Denn als Aaron das Kalb- oder Stierbild hatte anfertigen lassen, sprachen die Kinder Israel: „Das sind deine Götter, Israel, die dich aus Ägyptensland geführt haben“, 8. 4. Dieser Stierjahbedienst war demnach, wie schon oben erwähnt, jedenfalls eine Nachahmung des Apiskults Ägyptens, ohne daß jedoch das Volk vorläufig die Absicht hatte, sich gänzlich von Jahve abzuwenden. Eine ähnliche Erscheinung zieht sich ja durch die ganze Religionsgeschichte hindurch, besonders auch durch die Missionsgeschichte. Noch merkwürdiger ist die Geschichte Michas, Richt. 17 und 18; denn die Mutter Michas sprach ausdrücklich: „Ich habe das Geld dem HERRN [Jahve] geheiligt für meinen Sohn, daß man ein Bildnis und Abgott“ (מַצֵּבָה וּפִגְמוֹ, Bildsäule und gegossenes Bild) „machen soll“, Kap. 17, 3. Und dann wird gesagt: „Da nahm seine Mutter zweihundert Silberlinge und tat sie zu dem Goldschmied; der machte ihr ein Bild und Abgott [wie oben]; das war danach im Hause Michas.“ Daß diese Handlungsweise grober Synkretismus war, ergibt sich auch daraus, daß Micha baldmöglichst einen Leviten als seinen Hauspriester konsekrierte, 8. 7—10, und daß dieser sich scheinbar für einen Priester Jahves hielt.

Eine synkretistische Anschauung lag auch der Handlungsweise Amazias zugrunde, als er nach der Edomiter Schlacht die Götter der Kinder von Seir brachte und sie sich zu Göttern stellte, 2 Chron. 25, 14; denn das sollte jedenfalls seinerseits nicht eine Verwerfung Jahves bedeuten, sondern nur eine Anerkennung anderer Götter neben dem wahren Gott. Ein ähnliches Beispiel findet sich in der Geschichte des Königs Ahas. Denn dieser ließ nicht nur einen Altar nach dem Ebenbild und Gleichnis eines Götzaltars in Damaskus anfertigen, 2 Kön. 16, 11—14, sondern opferte auch den Göttern zu Damaskus, indem er sprach: „Die Götter der Könige zu Syrien halfen ihnen; darum will ich ihnen opfern, daß sie mir auch helfen“, 2 Chron. 28, 23. Es ist kaum daran zu zweifeln, daß gerade dieser Fälle wegen das Verbot Gottes gegen jede Form nicht nur der Abgötterei, sondern auch des Synkretismus so scharf war, Ex. 23, 13; Jos. 23, 7; Hos. 2, 17, so daß er den Gebrauch von Götzennamen im kultischen Sinn ganz und gar verwarf, um selbst jeden Verdacht einer Gleichstellung von vornherein abzuweisen. Auch in diesem Punkte wiederholt sich die Geschichte in unsern Tagen, da viele Religionsgeschichtler die christliche Religion nur als eine unter vielen Religionen behandeln und also den absoluten Charakter jener nicht anerkennen wollen.

Ein besonders eklatantes Beispiel dieser Abirrung sind die Samariter, deren Ursprung 2 Kön. 17 geschildert wird. Denn als dem Könige von Assyrien berichtet wurde, daß seine Kolonisten in Samaria von Löwen getötet würden, weil sie nichts von der Weise des Gottes im

Landes wußten, da ließ er einen Priester dahin bringen, um die Leute die Weise des Gottes im Lande zu lehren. „Da kam der Priester einer, die von Samaria weggeführt waren, und setzte sich zu Bethel und lehrte sie, wie sie den Herrn fürchten sollten. Aber ein jeglich Volk machte seinen Gott und taten sie in die Häuser auf den Höhen, die die Samariter machten, ein jeglich Volk in ihren Städten, darinnen sie wohnten. . . . Und weil sie den Herrn auch fürchteten, machten sie ihnen Priester auf den Höhen aus den Untersten unter ihnen und taten sie in die Häuser auf den Höhen. Also fürchteten sie den Herrn und dienten auch den Göttern, nach eines jeglichen Volks Weise, von dannen sie hergebracht waren. Und bis auf diesen Tag tun sie nach der alten Weise, daß sie weder den Herrn fürchten noch ihre Sitten und Rechte tun nach dem Gesetz und Gebot, das der Herr geboten hat den Kindern Jakobs, welchem er den Namen Israel gab“, V. 28—34. Diese bezeichnende Schilderung stimmt genau mit der kurzen Charakterisierung des Heilandes Joh. 4, 22: „Ihr wißt nicht, was ihr anbetet.“ Wenn sich auch bei den Samaritern noch ein Fragment der Messias Hoffnung fand, so war doch das Bild, das sie sich gemacht hatten, so verzerrt, daß es nötig war, faktisch ohne jede Voraussetzung das Evangelium unter ihnen zu predigen, wie das zu den Zeiten der Apostel durch Philipp geschah.

Sehen wir uns nun noch kurz die Hauptgötzen an, mit denen sich Israel (und Juda) verunreinigte. Die Teraphim, schon oben im Falle Rahels erwähnt, Gen. 31, 19. 34. 35, waren Hausgötter oder Bilder, die wohl zu abergläubischen Zwecken gebraucht wurden und im Hause standen (Luther: Götzen; die A. V.: images). Im Falle Michas werden die Bezeichnungen „Bildsäule“ und „Götzenbild“, Richt. 17, 4, mit Teraphim, V. 5, verbunden; vgl. Kap. 18, 14. 17. 18. 20. In 1 Sam. 15, 23 wird Widerspenstigkeit gegen Gott mit Teraphim (Götzendienst) auf eine Stufe gestellt. Im Falle von David und Michal steht ebenfalls die Pluralform, aber es scheint, daß sie hier im singularischen Sinn zu fassen ist, da der Zusammenhang klar auf ein einzelnes Bild hindeutet. 2 Kön. 23, 24 wird erzählt, daß Josia alle Bilder (Teraphim) und Götzen und alle Greuel, die im Lande Juda und zu Jerusalem gesehen wurden, auslegte. Im allgemeinen Sinn wird das Wort von den Propheten gebraucht, Hos. 3, 4 (Luther: Heiligtum) und Sach. 10, 2 (Luther: Götzen). In Jesek. 21, 21 (hebr. Bibel V. 26) lautet der Text wörtlich: „die Lospfeile schütteln über den Teraphim“, und es ist die Rede von dem Götzendienst des Königs zu Babel.

Was den Namen Baal (Pl. Baalim) anlangt, so ist zu merken, daß dieser nicht der Eigenname eines Gottes, sondern ein Gattungsnamen mit der Bedeutung „der Herr“ ist, der bei den Phöniziern, Karthagern und Kanaanitern als Bezeichnung der Gottheit diente. Im „Biblischen Nachschlagewerk“ (Stuttgart) wird darüber gesagt: „Da Baal = Herr war, konnte das Wort auch leicht zur Bezeichnung des

Gottes Israel dienen, dessen Namen, Jahve, man später seiner Heiligkeit wegen nicht mehr aussprach und wofür die Israeliten auch „Herr“ (Adonai) sagten. Aber der kanaanitische Baalsdienst war durchaus Naturdienst, und dieser Baale, der Herren von Feld und Weinberg, von Brunnen und Quellen, von Sonne und Himmel, war eine unbegrenzte Menge, über die sich im Lauf der Zeit der Baal je der betreffenden Stadt als oberste oder Hauptgottheit erhob.“ Deswegen finden sich eben die erweiterten Bezeichnungen, wie Baal=Berith (Herr des Bundes), Richt. 8, 33; 9, 4. 46, Baal=Peor, der Gott der Moabiter, Num. 25, 1; 31, 16; Jos. 22, 17; 2 Kön. 3, 27 (von manchen mit Chemosh identifiziert), und Baal=Zebub (Fliegengott, 2 Kön. 1, 2). Das Wort Βεελζεβούλ im Neuen Testament (Matth. 10, 25; 12, 24. 27; Mark. 3, 22; Luc. 11, 15 f.) wird gewöhnlich mit Beel=Zebub in Verbindung gebracht, da man annimmt, die Veränderung des letzten Buchstabens sei absichtlich geschehen, um den Teufel mit dem alttestamentlichen Götzen zu identifizieren, aber auch zugleich einen scharfen Spott zum Ausdruck zu bringen, da das griechische Wort „Gott des Kotes“, „god of dung“, bedeutet.

Mit Baal (als Maskulinum) standen in enger Verbindung die weiblichen Götzen Aschera und Astarte (Plural: Astartoth). Erstere war eine Göttin der Fruchtbarkeit und stand entschieden mit religiöser Anzucht im Zusammenhang. Sie wurde gewöhnlich in der Form einer Steinsäule oder eines Baumstammes ohne Zweige angebetet, und da die Göttin sowohl wie ihr Abzeichen denselben Namen trugen, so haben verschiedene Übersetzer (die LXX, die A. V., auch Luther) die Übersetzung „Hain“ gebraucht; vgl. Richt. 3, 7; 1 Kön. 18, 19; 2 Kön. 21, 7; 23, 4 ff. Aber Aschera spielte eine sehr untergeordnete Rolle neben Astarte, gewöhnlich nach der griechischen Form des Namens Astarte genannt. Auch sie war eine Göttin der Fruchtbarkeit, besonders bei Tieren und Menschen. Sie entsprach der assyrisch=babylonischen Göttin Ishtar, der Göttin der geschlechtlichen Liebe, deren Stern die Venus war und die auch, wie Diana, mit dem Mond in Verbindung stand; vgl. 1 Kön. 11, 5. 33; 2 Kön. 23, 13. Der Dienst Baals und der Astarte drang in Israel in der Nachzeit ein, Richt. 2, 13; 10, 6; 1 Sam. 7, 3. 4; 12, 10, wurde von Salomo anerkannt, 1 Kön. 11, 5, und schließlich durch Josia unterdrückt, 2 Kön. 23, 13. Dieser Dienst besagte nicht nur, daß man heidnische Gebräuche in den Dienst Jahves einmischte, sondern daß man wirklich in den sinnlichen Naturdienst der kanaanitischen Götzen versank und insbesondere die „heilige Anzucht“ zu Ehren der Gottheit mitmachte. Astarte ist wahrscheinlich auch die „Welcheth des Himmels“, wie Luther den Ausdruck wiedergegeben hat (englisch: queen of heaven), Jer. 7, 18; 44, 17. 18. Ihr Dienst fand sich, wo immer phönizische Kolonien angelegt wurden, wie aus Inschriften von Zypern, Cettium und Karthago hervorgeht. Sie wurde gewöhnlich abgebildet mit einem Ochsenkopf und Hörnern, mit einem weiblichen Ge-

sicht zwischen MondsickeIn. In der Schrift werden hohe Hügel und grüne Bäume mit ihrem Kultus in Verbindung gebracht, Deut. 12, 2; 2 Kön. 16, 4. Am schlimmsten war der Gögendienst Baals und der Astarte zur Zeit Habs und Hzebels.

Es werden in der Schrift aber nicht nur Götzen der Phönizier und der Kanaaniter erwähnt, sondern auch die Götter Syriens und die Götter Moabs und die Götter der Kinder Ammon und die Götter der Philister, Richt. 11, 6, sowie die Götzen von Seir oder Edom, 2 Chron. 25, 14. Baal=Peor ist oben erwähnt worden als Götze der Moabiter. Aber der Hauptgott dieses Volks war *Amos* oder *Chemosh* (vgl. Num. 21, 29; Jer. 48, 7; auch Richt. 11, 24, wo er den Ammonitern zugeschrieben wird). Er war wahrscheinlich ein Sonnengott, und er wird abgebildet mit einem Schwert in der rechten Hand und mit Lanze und Schild in der linken. Er hatte zwei brennende Fackeln neben sich, und es wurden ihm Kinder als Opfer dargebracht. Salomo führte den Chemosh-Kultus zu Jerusalem ein, 1 Kön. 11, 7; Jehu schaffte ihn ab, 2 Kön. 23, 13; vgl. 2 Kön. 3, 5. 27. Der Hauptgott der Philister war *Dagon*, der wenigstens zeitweilig zum Pantheon der israelitischen Götzendiener gehörte, Richt. 10, 6; vgl. 16, 21—30; 1 Sam. 5, 5. 6; 1 Chron. 10, 10. Er war sumerischen Ursprungs und scheint während der früheren babylonischen Periode nach dem Westen gekommen zu sein. Sein Abbild zeigt ihn gewöhnlich mit dem Leibe eines Fisches und dem Kopf und den Schultern eines Mannes. Er war Repräsentant der Kraft und der Fruchtbarkeit des Wassers. Sein voller Name auf phönizischen Stelen ist Baal=Dagon. Seine Hauptkultusorte waren Gaza und Asdod. Der Hauptgötze der Ammoniter, aber auch von den Phöniziern und andern Völkern verehrt, war *Molech* oder *Moloch*, augenscheinlich auch, wenigstens ursprünglich, ein Gattungsname = König oder Regent; denn es findet sich neben den Bezeichnungen Melkarth und Malkom auch Baal=Melech. Der Dienst dieses Götzen wurde in Israel eingeführt durch Salomo, 1 Kön. 11, 7b, und die Götzen, die der König damals baute, blieben im Gebrauch bis zur Zeit Josias, 2 Kön. 23, 13. Die Greuel, die mit dem Dienst Molochs in Verbindung standen, hatten als Hauptort das Tal Hinnom bei Jerusalem, 2 Kön. 23, 10; Jer. 30, 33; Jer. 7, 31, trotzdem nach dem mosaischen Gesetz der Dienst des Götzen mit dem Tode strafbar war, Lev. 20, 3—5. Moloch war ein Sonnengott, und wohl aus diesem Grunde war sein Kultus mit Feuer verbunden. Sein Bild war eine große eiserne Statue, innen höhl, so daß sie geheizt werden konnte. Es wird berichtet, daß Kinder auf die ausgebreiteten Arme des Götzen gelegt wurden, um so geröstet zu werden, Hefes. 16, 20 f.; 20, 31; Jer. 32, 35; 2 Kön. 21, 6. Ob die Stellen 2 Kön. 16, 3; 17, 17; 23, 10 auf einen andern Gebrauch hinweisen, nämlich auf die sogenannte Feuerprobe, ist scheinbar noch nicht genau ermittelt. Fraglich ist, ob die Götzen Malkom, Zeph. 1, 5, und Milkom, 1 Kön. 11, 5; 2 Kön. 23, 13, ohne weiteres mit Moloch

identifiziert werden können, zumal da letzterer in 1 Kön. 11, 7 von Milkom, B. 5, unterschieden wird. Zu Zeph. 1, 5 bemerkt Keil: „**מלכּוֹם**, ihr König, ist Baal, welcher auf Inschriften geradezu König genannt wird.“ Dasselbe mag von Milkom gelten.

Der uns hier zur Verfügung stehende Raum gestattet nicht, auf alle andern Erscheinungen in der Geschichte Israels und Judas, die mit Abgötterei und gökendienerischem Aberglauben verbunden sind, einzugehen. Doch seien noch kurz die folgenden erwähnt. Die „Feldteufel“ von Lev. 17, 7 (**מְרִיבִים**) waren Satyre, Dämonen, oder in weiterem Sinne Naturgötzen. Das Wort „Miplezeth“, 1 Kön. 15, 13, hat Luther nicht übersetzt (die englische Bible hat einfach „idol“); in wörtlicher Übersetzung: „weil sie der Aschera ein Bildnis gemacht hatte“, und die Vulgata wagt die Übersetzung *simulacrum Priapi*. Jedenfalls handelt es sich um einen kultischen Gegenstand. Daß der Götterdienst wenigstens zeitweilig im Volke Israel getrieben wurde, ergibt sich schon aus Amos 5, 25. 26: „Habt ihr vom Hause Israel mir in der Wüste die vierzig Jahre lang Schlachtopfer und Speisopfer geopfert? Jawohl! Ihr truget den Sichth, euren König, und Chium, euer Bild, den Stern eurer Götter, welche ihr euch selbst gemacht hattet.“ Diese Stelle zitiert Stephan in seiner Rede vor dem Hohen Rat in Jerusalem, Apost. 7, 43, nach den LXX, nur daß der Text Komphan statt Naiphan hat: „Ihr nahmet die Hütte Molochs und das Gestirn eures Gottes Komphan.“ Komphan oder Kephän findet sich sonst nicht, und da das Wort eine Wiedergabe des hebräischen Chium ist, so ist die Erklärung Keils, daß es sich bei den LXX um eine falsche Lesung des unvokalisierten **כּוֹמֶן** handelt, wohl annehmbar. Und der Sinn ist klar: „Der König, dessen Hütte, und die Bilder, deren Gestell sie trugen, war ein Stern, den sie sich zu Gott gemacht hatten, das heißt, eine Gestirngottheit. . . Die Hütte und das Gestell waren die Geräte für die Aufbewahrung und den Transport der Bilder des Sterngottes.“ Andere Stellen, die auf Gestirnsdienst hinweisen, sind Zeph. 1, 5; Jer. 19, 13; Hesek. 8, 16. Auch die Stelle Jes. 65, 11 wird hier zu erwähnen sein, obwohl die englische Bibel statt der Lutherschen Übersetzung „Nichtet dem Gad einen Tisch und schenket voll ein vom Tranxopfer dem Meni“ an erster Stelle hat: „Prepare a table for that troop [Gad] and that furnish the drink-offering unto that number [Meni].“ Gad bezieht sich hier jedenfalls auf den personifizierten und vergötterten Planeten Jupiter.

Endlich sei noch erwähnt, daß Nehustan, 2 Kön. 18, 4, sich selbst erklärt und daß die Götkenamen 1 Kön. 17, 30. 31: Suchoth=Benoth, Nergel, Asima, Ribhas, Thartak, Abramelech und Anamelech nicht sowohl in das Pantheon Israels als in das der Assyrer und dann der früheren Samariter gehören. Eine Beschreibung dieser Gottheiten muß in einem andern Artikel folgen.

P. E. Krehmann



### Sermon Study on Jas. 4, 13—17

Eisenach Epistle for the Sunday after New Year

While the *Expositor's Greek Testament* states that vv. 13—17 "form an independent section entirely unconnected with what precedes or follows" (p. 462), Dean Plummer in the *Expositor's Bible* very definitely and clearly establishes the connection between our text, the context, and the one thought underlying the entire epistle when he says: "Worldliness and want of humility are the two kindred subjects which form the groundwork of this portion of the epistle. This fourth chapter falls into three main divisions, of which the third and last is before us; and these two subjects underlie all three. In the first the arrogant grasping after the pleasures, honors, and riches of the world, in preference to the love of God, is condemned. In the second the arrogant judging of others in defiance of the divine law of charity is forbidden. In the third arrogant trust in the security of human undertakings, without consideration of God's will, is denounced. The transition from the false confidence which leads men to judge others with a light heart to the false confidence which leads men to account the future as their own is easily made; and thus once more, while we seem to be abruptly passing to a fresh topic, we are really moving quite naturally from one branch of the main subject to another. The assurance which finds plenty of time for censuring others but little or none for censuring self is closely akin to the assurance which counts on having plenty of time for all its schemes, without thought of death or of the divine decrees. This, then, is the subject before us—presumptuous security as to future undertakings. The future is God's, not ours, just as to judge mankind belongs to Him and not to us. Therefore, to think and speak of the future as if we had the power to control it is as presumptuous as to think and speak of our fellow-men as if we had the power to judge them. In both cases we assume a knowledge and an authority which we do not possess." (Vol. VI, p. 618 f.)

V. 13: "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain." Go to now, or as we would now say, Come! Come, now! In classical Greek this imperative has assumed so completely the force of an interjection that it retains its singular form even when used, as it is here and 5, 1, with a plural. It occurs in the New Testament only in the two passages mentioned. Now establishes the connection with the preceding context, adding another instance of sinful presumption. Ye that say. Who is addressed, the ungodly or the brethren of v. 11, the Christians, to whom the entire epistle is written? If we compare the language of vv. 11. 12 with that of



our passage, we find that vv. 13-17 is no more scathing in its rebuke of a sin quite common among the Christians than vv. 11, 12, directly addressed to the brethren. The sin of arrogant planning is no greater sin than that of arrogant judging; both are in reality incompatible with Christianity, both are a result of leaving God out of consideration, and both are sins besetting also Christians, against which a warning is therefore always in order. While writing this passage, James may have been thinking of the trafficking Jews, the enemies of the Church, though we know that his readers, too, who were believers in Christ, were chiefly, if not exclusively, Jews, chap. 1, 1, and as such especially inclined to the national and racial sins and failings of their people. Nor is this sin of presumptuous planning of business or of any other activity a sin altogether peculiar to Jews, as experience teaches. "The Jews were (and, for that matter, still are) great traders, and no doubt there were merchants enough to whom the apostle's description applied. But this is not a folly restricted to one class or profession. Pleasures and all sorts of occupations are planned just as these traders planned their traveling and trading" (Lenski, *Eisenach Epistle Selections*, p. 175), hence are just as sinful.

*Today or tomorrow.* Some of the best manuscripts read *and* instead of *or* to indicate that the journey lasts exactly two days, "today to set out, tomorrow to arrive" (*Bible Commentary*). If we read *or*, we see the readers choosing between the days, picking after due deliberation the one appearing most suitable to their plans. In both cases they act as though they were complete masters of time, as though both today and tomorrow were under their full control; they choose one out of two not because one is more uncertain than the other, but because of two certain things one offers better opportunities than the other. *We will go.* The manuscripts are about equally divided between the future indicative and the aorist subjunctive. There is little difference in the meaning. The indicative would be the volitive future, expressing intention and determination, we *will go*, not merely futurity, we *shall go*, whereas the subjunctive expresses, from Homer down, "what the speaker or speakers resolve or insist on, amounting practically to an imperative, let us go." We are going! That settles the matter. They are complete masters of their actions. Nothing can stop them. They have resolved to do something and that means to them that it is going to be done. *Into such a city*, into this city. The *τινός* points out the object. This whole description fits modern business methods. We see men poring over maps of the territory about to be added to their own, carefully weighing the advantages and disadvantages of certain cities, the railroad connections, other transportation facilities, laboring condi-

tions, distances from other important cities, water-power, etc., and finally triumphantly pointing out one city: This is the city! There we will go! They are masters over the various cities; all lie before them as their rightful territory. The world owes them a living. The world is their own. They have only to choose, to select, what to them seems the most important and promising spot, which part of the world, which city, is to be privileged to serve them, to be honored by the establishment of one of their emporiums. *And continue there a year.* And we will do, or, let us do, there a year. To do is used much in the same sense as the English phrase to do time, to spend, to pass a certain time in a certain activity. We will spend a year there. Not only today and tomorrow, but the whole year is at their command and disposal. They are absolute masters of time. Time's chief purpose is to serve their objects and aspirations; it is at their service, even as a slave must obey the will and whims of his master. *And buy and sell, ἐμπορεύσόμεθα;* we will go into, toward, go a-trading, open an emporium, a market, a branch office. Cp. chap. 1, 11, the rich man shall "fade away in his ways," in his travels, in his trafficking. Already Calov calls attention to the extensive traveling of the Jews. Aquila, born in Pontus, Acts 18, 1, meets Paul in Corinth, where he had lately come from Italy, 1,200 to 1,500 miles removed from his native state; with Paul he journeys to Ephesus, Acts 18, 18; a few years later he is back at Rome, Rom. 16, 3, and again some eight years later at Ephesus, 2 Tim. 4, 19. Christ speaks of the omnipresent Jew, compassing land and sea, to make one proselyte, Matt. 23, 15, usually combining with this purpose the quest of gain, of making money. The Jew was known, feared, hated, throughout the length and breadth of the Roman Empire as a keen, shrewd, heartless business competitor, a master at obtaining gain, at getting the best of a bargain. Being Jews, the readers of this epistle were in special danger of remaining, or again becoming, like their brethren according to the flesh, from whom they as Christians differed so essentially in spirit. Hence the need of this impressive, forceful warning against presumptuous, arrogant planning, against leaving God out of consideration, against regarding His gifts, His creation, time, opportunity, success, as absolutely within their own power, at their own disposal, to be used by them as they saw fit.

*And get gain, καὶ κερδήσωμεν.* Note again their determination. They will make money, they cannot fail. They are masters and shapers of their destinies, builders of their fortunes, molders of their fame and riches. To get gain, to make money, to profit, to secure dividends, that is their sole object in business, their life-work. That determination does not stop at child labor, at sweat-

shop methods, at looking for loopholes for the purpose of circumventing unfavorable legislation, at non-payment of government taxes, at ruthless suppression of competition, at lockouts, at murder and bloodshed. Dividends must be paid, even if every dollar is tainted with the sweat of underpaid labor and every cent with the blood of overworked women and children, Jas. 5, 1-6. The three conjunctions "separate the different items of the plan, which are rehearsed thus one by one with manifest satisfaction. The speakers gloat over the different steps of the program which they have arranged for themselves." (Plummer, in *Expositor's Bible*.) Is not gain, success, pleasure, rather than God's will very frequently uppermost in our planning for the future? Do not the plans of Christians often ignore the royal law of love and take into consideration only their own interests?

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." V. 14. The Vaticanus omits  $\tau\acute{\alpha}$  and  $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\phi$ , and hence some commentaries connect the two clauses: You do not know what the life of tomorrow will be. The sense is not materially changed. The translation of the English Bible is favored by most manuscripts, and there is no reason to change it.  $\text{Οὕτως}$  indicates a certain quality, "of such a nature as." Their very nature precludes the possibility of knowing, understanding (*sich auf etwas verstehen*). No matter how carefully man lays his plans, no matter how shrewdly he considers all eventualities, he is of such a nature that he does not understand the things of tomorrow, does not know what sudden changes may arise, what unforeseen events may happen to ruin all his plans. The apostle at once proves his statement. For what, of what sort, kind, is your life?  $\text{Ζωή}$  designates the nature, the essence, of life, life as existence. The very nature of the readers' existence makes it impossible to know the things of tomorrow. *It is even a vapor.* According to most manuscripts not  $\text{ἐστί}$  but  $\text{ἐστὶ}$ , ye are. The second person makes the statement of the apostle much more forcible and to the point. Not only your life, but you yourselves are a vapor, a symbol of all that is weak and transient, easily destroyed. The slightest puff of wind will hasten not only its passing-by, but its end. Aquila translates the "vanity" of Eccl. 1, 1, etc., by the word  $\text{ἀνίς}$ , the word used by James in our passage. Like a vapor, man *appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.* Note the two present participles, very effectively picturing the vapor that is man coming into view, a thin, flimsy vapor; and this coming into view, this appearance, lasts only a short while; after that, even before it can solidify, even before it can possibly change its vaporous nature, that vapor man is already in the

process of disappearing — and then? Gone, vanished, and the place thereof shall know it no more, Ps. 103, 16. What folly for man to plan and prepare for the future as though he were master of it! How necessary is the constant repetition of this well-known truth lest the spirit of mortals become proud, self-content, presumptuous, forgetful of God. For this reason Scripture does not tire in dinning this commonplace in our ears lest we forget, lest we forget. Cp. Job 7, 7; 8, 9; Ps. 39, 4—6; 102, 3, 11; 144, 4.

"For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that," v. 15. The apostle does not mean to say that we are to use the name of God continually, that we are not to speak of any plan without mentioning the name of God, much less that the mere repetition of this formula would be sufficient. That would, as Robertson correctly observes, get to be cant or mere claptrap. (*Practical and Social Aspects of Christianity*, p. 220.) The point is rather that our hearts and minds should be filled with God. God should be the element in whom consciously we live and move and have our being. "The thing that matters is for us to have the right attitude of heart to God, not the chattering of a formula. God does not have to be propitiated by a charm or amulet. God should be the silent partner in all our plans and work, to be consulted, to be followed whenever His will is made known." (Robertson, *l. c.*, p. 221.) Then it will be quite the natural thing that this mind filled with God finds expression for its thoughts in words similar to those used by the apostle, Matt. 12, 34. Then these words, whether used frequently or rarely, will be the expression of our inmost mind and heart, pleasing to God and man. "Paul frequently spoke of his plans, sometimes mentioning God, as in Acts 18, 21 and 1 Cor. 4, 19; 16, 7, but also with no mention of God in words, as in Acts 19, 21; Rom. 15, 28; 1 Cor. 16, 5. But always Paul felt that his movements were 'in the Lord,' as in Phil. 2, 24. He never left God out of his life." (Robertson, *l. c.*, p. 221 f.) Calov: We should always think of God's providence and our own mortality. The *Bible Commentary* quotes Stier: "Our calendars give the longest day and the shortest, the fasts and the festivals; but no calendar gives the Last Day."

The very fact that James speaks of future plans here proves that not every solicitude for the future is prohibited. It is God's will that we provide and plan for the future; cp. Prov. 6, 6—11; 24, 27, 30 ff.; 30, 25; 31, 15 ff.; the examples of Joseph, Gen. 41, 39 ff.; of Christ, John 6, 12; 13, 29; of the apostles, Acts 11, 29; 23, 17 ff.; 27, 10, 21, 33, 34. "Such solicitude only is forbidden as either hinders us in seeking the kingdom of God, Matt. 6, 33, or has its origin in lack of faith in God, Matt. 6, 30, or instead of following, takes the precedence over, the care for the kingdom of God, Matt. 6, 33,

or finally disregards God's providence and blessing, Jas. 4, 13." (Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*.) In planning for the future, let us not forget God; let us place Him where He belongs, first in our thoughts and first in our plans, Ps. 17, 5; 37, 23; Prov. 16, 1; 20, 24; 21, 31; Jer. 10, 23.

"But now ye rejoice in your boastings. All such rejoicing is evil," v. 16. *But now*; now rather; as things are, however. *Ye rejoice, you glory, in your boastings*. The word ἀλαζονία is found only here and 1 John 2, 16. In the Septuagint it is used, e. g., Wisdom of Solomon 5, 8: "What hath pride profited us, and what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us?" 4 Macc. 1, 26; 2, 15 it is used side by side with covetousness, envy, pride, and lust of power, and in 8, 19 it is called destructive. Plutarch informs us that ἀλᾶζον was the term used for such as regard themselves richer and more energetic, possessed of greater initiative, than they are in reality and promise what they cannot fulfil. We may render the word, arrogance, vaunting, presumption, that cock-sureness, that braggadocio, which may become so obnoxious as to be nauseating to the unfortunate victim who cannot rid himself of his tormentor. The term describes the know-it-all, who is constantly speaking of his successes, of his business acumen, his shrewd foresight, his penetrating knowledge of market conditions, to whom the future is an open book, who smiles down every attempt to advise or warn him, for whom the word failure is deleted from the dictionary. The apostle uses the plural, as it is simply impossible for these men to confine their boastings to one time; they are continually swaggering and every time overwhelming one with the multitude of their vauntings. Christians, especially successful Christians, Christians who have met with few reversals, whose life is apparently a series of successes, are often afflicted with this tendency. They look upon themselves as self-made men, and they want every one to know it; they are always ready to give advice, are constantly hatching new plans for the future, always know exactly what is wrong with the congregation, the pastor, the less successful man, the world at large; they are always ready to prescribe their panacea and are sure of results if only their advice will be followed. *All such rejoicing is evil*, says the apostle. Every glorying of this nature is wicked. There is a glorying which is pleasing to God and is demanded by Him; cp. Ps. 56, 5. 11; 59, 17; 92, 5; 115, 1; Is. 4, 25; Jer. 9, 23. 24; Rom. 5, 2. 3; 2 Cor. 12, 5. 9; Gal. 6, 14. But to glory in one's own cock-sureness, in one's own vauntings and arrogances, is wicked, not originating in God but instigated by the Wicked One, Satan. It is a boasting wicked in itself since it is not in keeping with God's will, leaves out of consideration the Ruler of the universe, and puts man in the place of God;

wicked, since it will make man a partner of wicked, boastful, vain-glorious Satan, who ever was, and ever will be, a vaunting spirit, Gen. 3, 4. 5; 1 Chron. 21, 1—4; Job 1, 9—12; 2, 4. 5; Matt. 4, 3. 6. 8. 9. It is a characteristic of the workers of iniquity that they boast themselves, Ps. 94, 4, "cause themselves to talk," because they love to hear themselves talk. Christians, whose flesh is as proud, self-satisfied, and vainglorious as the flesh of the unbeliever, are in danger of yielding to the temptation to let their flesh speak, to glory in their own accomplishments, in their own resourcefulness, and to forget the humility befitting God's children, Ps. 115, 1. They need to be warned time and again not to become guilty of this wicked sin of glorying in their own boastings lest they deny God and say, "Who is the Lord?"

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin," v. 17. *Therefore*, these things being so, says the apostle, drawing the conclusion from what has been said. Some commentaries refer this verse to either the entire epistle or at least to chapters 3 and 4; others restrict its reference to vv. 13—16. We grant that v. 17 is in keeping with the tenor of the entire epistle, a warning against externalism in religion, words without corresponding deeds, knowledge without adequate action. It is a general truth and may be applied to every preceding admonition, and in fact to every admonition in the Bible. Yet in this very chapter the apostle several times applies a general truth to the specific point under consideration; cp. vv. 5. 12; also 2, 10; 3, 2 a; 5, 8 b. 9 b. 16 b. Moreover, "vv. 13—15 constitute a unit in a marked way. Here a sin of omission is described in a concrete and detailed way." (Lenski, *Eisenach Epistle Selections*, p. 179.) The apostle means to say: You know now what is good. You know that you ought to put your trust entirely in the Lord and not to glory in your own ability. You know that, if you leave God out of your plans, your planning, which may be otherwise perfectly justifiable, and your glorying, which, if it has the proper object, will be pleasing to God, your planning and glorying will become wicked, because you have omitted something the Lord requires besides the mere outward act. Hence it is sin, missing the mark of perfection required by God. And being sin, being evil, the omission of anything demanded by God, the failure to do the least good prescribed in the Law, ought to be scrupulously avoided by Christians, who are begotten of Him, with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning, who does only that which is good and constantly does all that is good.

While the apostle in this connection applies this truth to presumptuous planning, we must not forget that it is a general truth, admitting of many applications, a truth taught elsewhere in



Scripture, Matt. 23, 23; 25, 41-45; Luke 19, 20-26. James does not mean to say that ignorance of the Law will excuse the person failing to do the will of God. The *Expositor's Greek Testament* refers to Acts 3, 17 and 1 Tim. 1, 13 as "the converse of this, namely, doing what is wrong in ignorance," and adds, "in which case it is excusable." A closer reading of the passages adduced will show that neither Paul nor Peter regards ignorance as an excuse for sin; but the one speaks of a sin committed in ignorance as a sin to be repented of, the other as something that stamps him as the greatest of sinners. And the sin of those who crucified Christ, though a sin of ignorance, was a sin for which Christ asks for forgiveness on the strength of His suffering and dying for this very sin. There is no "excusable" sin, though there are degrees of wickedness, of guilt, of responsibility, Luke 12, 47; John 9, 41; 13, 17. "Some have suspected a direct reference to Rom. 14, 23. We can scarcely assume so much; but the correspondence is very remarkable, and St. James supplements St. Paul. 'It is sin to doubt whether a thing be right and yet to do it. It is also sin to know that a thing is right and yet to leave it undone.'" (*The Bible Commentary*, on Jas. 4, 17.)

We here read a warning that is in place at all times and under all circumstances; a warning against that spirit of self-satisfaction which rests before it has reached perfection, which is content with having done some good, though that good may be far from being the best within one's power and still farther removed from that ideal required by God; that easy-going Christianity which obeys God in such matters as seem necessary to the Christian, but omits, neglects, thoughtlessly overlooks, other matters, which do not seem so important or which demand more energy, more fervency, a closer attention to details, a stricter adherence to principles offensive to the flesh; a Christianity that praises God on Sunday, that calls upon Him in the day of trouble, but relegates Him into the background in matters pertaining to business, to the affairs of daily life. I could give more, I could and ought to devote more time to reading Scripture, to personal evangelism, to working out my own salvation with fear and trembling, but why exert oneself, why do what others do not do who are regarded as good Christians? Says Robertson: "The good is enemy of the best, and the bad is enemy of the good. Down the steps we go to the bottom of the ladder." (*L. c.*, p. 225.) Onward, upward! 1 Pet. 1, 14-16; Phil. 3, 12-14.

James is not a social reformer, but a preacher of God's Word, Law and Gospel. He is not satisfied with mere social uplift; his object is not to establish an era of good feeling and brotherly relationship within the community, irrespective of its relationship to God and Christ; he is not advancing and advocating a higher

code of business ethics to be enforced by local, national, international chambers of commerce or business associations. His epistle is not addressed to the civic authorities nor to the community at large; he writes to the brethren, who like him have been regenerated by the Gospel, 1, 18, brought to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, 2, 1. These he admonishes to manifest their faith by good works, to prove that their faith is not a dead conviction, a mere intellectual knowledge, a faith of the head and mouth, that it is rather a living faith, enabling them, urging them, constraining them, to do good works, to keep themselves unspotted from the world, its sinful pleasures, customs, and business methods.

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Very fittingly this passage has been selected as the Epistle for the Sunday after New Year. The grace of God in Christ Jesus, which stands ready to forgive all our sins, to protect and guide us throughout the year, is a sanctifying grace, Titus 2, 12. Gratitude toward the God of grace must permeate our inmost being, our very thoughts and plannings for the future. At the beginning of the new year we lift our hearts and eyes to our Father in heaven and ask Him, Our Father who art in heaven, let us never forget Thee in our planning; let us ever commit all our ways to Thee; let us ever strive for perfection. — *How shall We Enter the New Year?* Shall we enter it like the vainglorious children of the world? Shall we enter it as children trusting in their heavenly Father? — *The Apostle's New Year Message*. A warning against vainglory; an admonition to humility; an exhortation to perfection. — *Two Dangers Threatening Every Christian*: planning without God; knowledge without deeds. — *Forgetting God in Making our Plans*. That is a common practise; that is foolish; that is sinful.

TH. LAETSCH

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## Miscellanea

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### Documents

on points of doctrine as they were recorded in connection with the merger of the Hauge Synod, the Norwegian Synod, and the United Norwegian Church, 1908—1917.

The committees appointed by the Hauge Synod, the Norwegian Synod, and the United Norwegian Church met for a continuation of the negotiations Tuesday, the 7th of April (1908), in Our Savior's School Hall. The meeting lasted two days.

The negotiations carried on here concerned the doctrine of the Call (*Kaldet*) and Conversion (*Omvendelsen*). These doctrines had been discussed at two meetings in 1907 and were concluded at this meeting, and the committee here releases the results of its discussions. The theses published here are, as regards the Call, based on (Pontoppidan's) *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed*, Qu. 478, and as regards Conversion, on Qus. 677 and 680.

All theses were accepted unanimously.

#### Concerning the Doctrine of the Call (*Kaldet*)

1. Natural man is in a state of spiritual sleep and spiritual death.
2. In order that a person thus spiritually sleeping and spiritually dead may be converted and saved, God calls him through His Gospel.
3. When God thus calls men, He by His Word touches their hearts; i. e., those persons who are called (*kaldes*) cannot escape perceiving the influence of the call in their hearts through the Law and the Gospel, in other words, certain unavoidable thoughts and feelings.
4. Through His call God reveals to the one who is called His mercy; i. e., He instructs the one who is called concerning this, that there is mercy for sinners.
5. Through His call God offers to the one who is called His grace, and this offer is meant equally earnestly toward [lit., over against] all those who are called; i. e., God offers this grace to all who are called with the sincere purpose [earnest intention] that He will grant it and that he who is called shall accept it.
6. When God through His Word calls, He in the same instant gives power to make this grace one's own.
  - a. Man has by nature or of himself no strength, power, or ability to make this proffered grace his own or to accomplish anything toward his own conversion. Cf. also Rom. 7, where the apostle describes natural man and his lack of strength toward that which is good.
  - b. Neither does man before regeneration receive any inherent power which he now has as his own and whereby he now himself can decide in favor of grace.
  - c. But God's call is an efficacious call, which works powerfully on the heart of him who is called, so that he who is called now through the offered grace, under the influence of the Spirit of God and because of the power which now by the call is working on him, has a full opportunity and real possibility to become converted or can convert himself,

can repent of his sin and believe on Christ. And this opportunity and possibility is equally great for all who are called, whether they follow [heed] the call or not.

### Conversion (*Omvendelsen*)

1. In his natural state man has fallen away from God, is a stranger to His grace, yes, even hostile to Him.

2. In his natural state man is also altogether impotent spiritually, dead in sin.

3. No ability, or power, is found in man of himself to change this tragic condition nor to cooperate in the least toward any change.

4. The great change which must occur in the person who is fallen away from God and dead in sins the Scripture calls conversion.

5. To convert oneself (*omvende sig*) is to turn from darkness to light, from Satan's power to God, and this comes about by knowing, and repenting of, one's sins and by believing in Jesus. Therefore there belong two parts to conversion: 1) regret [sorrow] (*Anger*) and contrition over sin and 2) faith in the Lord Jesus.

6. In order that man can come to the acknowledgment of his sinful state and to sorrow and repentance over it, God uses His Law, which through its conviction and judgment works on the understanding, will, and conscience; and this Law man must hear and consider.

7. If a person by the working [operation] of God through the Law has arrived at the acknowledgment of his sin and damnation [God's judgment on sin], he is nevertheless thereby not yet converted; for such a person can still, contrary to God's intention, either be brought to despair or become self-righteous or revert to the old life of sin.

8. When the Law has overcome a man's heart so that he will humble himself before [it will accept] God's judgment, it causes brokenness of heart or regret over sin and in this manner becomes a schoolmaster unto Christ.

9. Solely and alone through the drawing of God in the Gospel, without force [any coercion], that person who by the working [operation] of the Law has arrived at the acknowledgment and contrition over sin is now brought to faith in Christ and thus entirely converted and changed; "of a darkened understanding is made an enlightened understanding, and of a rebellious will is made an obedient will; and this Scripture calls to create a new heart, Ps. 51, 12."

10. When a man is not converted, man alone bears the [entire] responsibility and guilt, because he would not, that is, he, in spite of the fact that God, through the call (*Kaldet*) makes it possible for man to be converted or to convert himself, he opposes, and makes impossible, the work of the Holy Ghost both in Law and Gospel, something that a man can do at each step (point) [a process which a man can nullify in each instance].

11. When a man is converted, the honor [glory] belongs to God alone, because He throughout, from beginning to end, without any cooperation on the part of man, works conversion in that man who is converted (lit., converts himself), i. e., acknowledges his sin and believes [trusts] in Christ.

See also Eph. 2, 1—10 and Rom. 3, 20—28, where the apostle describes conversion as a gracious act of God, for which the honor belongs to God alone.

### The Madison Settlement

Regarding the doctrine of election the union committees have agreed to subscribe to the following:

1. The union committees of the Synod and the United Church acknowledge unanimously and without reservation that doctrine of election which is presented in Article XI of the Formula of Concord (the so-called first form of doctrine) and in Pontoppidan's *Sandhed til Gud-frygtighed*, Qu. 548 (the so-called second form of doctrine).

2. Since both the negotiating church-bodies recognize that the Formula of Concord, Article XI, presents the pure and correct doctrine of the Word of God and the Lutheran Church concerning the election of the children of God to salvation, it is deemed unnecessary to church unity to draw up new and more extensive theses regarding this article of faith.

3. Since, however, in the presentation of the doctrine of election two forms of doctrine have manifestly been used, both of which have gained prescriptive right and recognition within the orthodox Lutheran Church, in that some, in agreement with the Formula of Concord, let the doctrine of election comprehend the entire salvation of the elect, from the calling to the glorification (Formula of Concord, Art. XI, Thor. Expl., 10—20), and teach an election "to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," while others, like Pontoppidan, in conformity with John Gerhard, Scriver, and other acknowledged teachers in the Church, define election rather as the degree of final glorification, with faith and perseverance wrought by the Spirit as its necessary pre-supposition, and teach that "God has predestinated all those to eternal life who from eternity He has seen would accept the proffered grace, believe on Jesus Christ, and remain steadfast in this faith unto the end"; and since neither of these two forms of doctrine presented in this manner contradicts any doctrine revealed in the Word of God, but each does full justice to the order of salvation as elsewhere presented in the Word of God and the Confession of the Church, we hold that this fact ought not to cause any division in the Church nor disturb that unity of Spirit in the bond of peace which God desires should prevail among us.

4. Since, however, during the doctrinal controversy among us, words and expressions have been used—rightly or wrongly attributed to the one party or the other—which seemed to the other side a denial of the Confession of the Church or to lead to such denial, we have agreed to reject all erroneous doctrines which seek to explain away the mystery of election (Formula of Concord, Thor. Expl., Art. XI, 39—44) either in a synergistic manner or in a Calvinizing way; in other words, [we reject] every doctrine which either, on the one hand, would weaken man's feeling of responsibility as regards (lit., over against) the acceptance or rejection of grace.

5. On the one hand we reject

a) The doctrine that the mercy of God and the most holy merit of

Christ is not the only cause of our election, but that there also in us is a cause thereof on account of which God has elected us to eternal life;

b) The doctrine that in the election God has been determined by, or has taken into account, or has been directed by, the good conduct of man or by anything which man is or does or omits to do "as of himself or by his own natural powers";

c) The doctrine that the faith in Christ, which is indissolubly connected with election, is wholly or in part a product of, or dependent upon, man's own choosing, power, or ability (however, compare Formula of Concord, Art. XI, Thor. Decl., 35 and 44);

d) Or that this faith is the result of a power and ability imparted to man by the call of grace, a power now dwelling in, and belonging to, the unregenerate heart, to decide in favor of grace.

6. On the other hand we reject

a) The doctrine that in the election God acts arbitrarily and without motive, so that He points out and counts indiscriminately a certain arbitrary number of individuals and ordains them to conversion and salvation, while all the others are passed by;

b) The doctrine that the will of God regarding our salvation is of two kinds, one revealed in the Scriptures in the general order of salvation and another, different from this and unknown to us, which concerns only the elect and imparts to these a deeper love, a more effective calling of God, and a larger measure of grace than are brought to those who remain in unbelief and condemnation;

c) The doctrine that, when the resistance which God in conversion succeeds in removing from those who are saved is not removed from the others, who finally are lost, this difference in result has its cause in God and in a different will regarding salvation in His act of election;

d) The doctrine that a believer can, and ought to, have an absolute certainty of his election and salvation instead of an assurance of faith built upon the promises of God and joined with fear and trembling and with the possibility of falling from grace, which, however, by the grace of God, he believes will not become a reality in his case;

e) To summarize, all views and doctrines concerning election which directly or indirectly would conflict with the order of salvation and would not give to all a full and equally great opportunity of salvation or which in any manner would violate the Word of God, which says that "God will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth," from which gracious and merciful will of God all election to eternal life has its origin.

On the basis of the above settlement the union committees submit to their respective church-bodies to adopt the following

#### Resolution

WHEREAS, Our Confession establishes that "for the true unity of the Church it is sufficient that there be agreement in the doctrine of the Gospel and in the administration of the Sacraments"; and

WHEREAS, Our former committees, by the grace of God, have attained unity in the doctrines concerning the calling, conversion, and the order of salvation in general, and [since] we all confess as our sincere faith



that we are saved by grace alone, without any cooperation on our part; and

WHEREAS, The negotiations of our new committees have led to a satisfactory settlement concerning the doctrine of election and to an unreserved and unanimous acknowledgment of the doctrine of election which is presented in the Formula of Concord, Thor. Decl., Art. XI, and in Pontoppidan's *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed*, Qu. 548; therefore we hereby

Declare, That the essential unity now attained concerning these doctrines is sufficient for church union.

May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, grant us the grace of His Holy Spirit that we all may be one in Him and ever remain steadfast in such Christian and God-pleasing unity! Amen.

**"Evangelisk Luthersk Kirketidende"**

(Vol. 44, No. 2, p. 36 f., Jan. 10, 1917)

§ 2. The Joint Committee expresses joy and thanks to God and the aforementioned men [namely, Prof. C. K. Preus and Rev. I. B. Torrison in their report dated October 4, 1916] for the brotherly spirit which appears in the document [the Preus-Torrison overture] and for the stated desire to participate in the union of the three conferring bodies and to work together with them for the attainment of the purposes aimed at by the union.

§ 3. The Joint Committee, however, feels that it is for certain reasons prevented from following the procedure [considers itself, on certain grounds, free to disregard the suggested procedure] suggested in the aforementioned overture [a special settlement between the three conferring bodies, on the one hand, and a group of men and congregations belonging to one of the bodies, on the other hand], mainly because it would cause misunderstandings and difficulties.

§ 4. But as far as the essential content is concerned, the Joint Committee will nevertheless accommodate the aforementioned overture in that it hereby recommends to its respective synodical conventions that they accept the following motions:

"This convention is expressly cognizant of the three reservations concerning § 1, § 3, and § 4\* in the Settlement, which are included in the overture from Prof. C. K. Preus and Rev. I. B. Torrison, and declares that in the aforementioned overture there is found nothing that is contrary to Scripture or the Confession, but considers the position expressed in the overture as a satisfactory expression for unity in faith; wherefore the group of men and congregations whose position is maintained in the aforementioned overture are invited to join the new body on a basis of full equality and mutual fraternal recognition."

NOTE. — It is self-evident that the above resolution must not be interpreted in such a way that the Settlement [Agreement—*Opgjøer*] between the three contracting parties thereby has been limited or altered.

There are grounds for hope that the pending union, which for so long has been the object of the prayers of the Church, may be accomplished without new schisms of our Synod and congregations. In behalf of which there should be continued prayer.

M. O. WEE    IVAR YLVISAKER    FEDER TANGJERD

\* Since [there are those whose suspicions have been aroused by the expression] objections have been raised especially against the expression "feeling of responsibility as regards the acceptance or rejection of grace," we refer, so far as the meaning of the aforementioned expression is concerned, to the declaration of Dr. Stub and Dr. Kildahl in 1914, acknowledged and made public by the Joint Committee, reading as follows:

By the words "feeling of responsibility as regards the acceptance or rejection of grace" it is not to be said (nor do the words say so) that a person stands in the same relation to the acceptance of grace as to the rejection of grace, since the acceptance flows from a source entirely different from [the source of] rejection. That a person accepts grace, which is the same as to believe, is the work of God alone; that a person rejects grace is of man alone; or, in other words, therein man alone is the cause, and for this man alone must bear the guilt. The following paragraphs in the Settlement prove this inasmuch as the acceptance of grace, or faith, is ascribed to God solely and alone, while the rejection of grace is ascribed to man alone.

With these words reference is made—as the context itself and the words "responsibility" and "over against" substantiate—to the same as the Formula of Concord presents when it declares that there are those who say "that, since they are unable of their own natural powers to convert themselves to God, they will continue to oppose God altogether or wait until God converts them by force; or since they can do nothing in these spiritual things, but everything is the operation of God the Holy Ghost alone, they will regard neither Word nor Sacrament, they will neither hear nor read until God, immediately, instils into them His gifts, so that they can truly feel and perceive in themselves that God has converted them." (Formula of Concord, Sol. Decl., Art. II, § 46.)

The intention is therefore, on the one hand, to bring home the fact that man has obligations over against the means of grace or over against the grace which God in the means of grace offers for acceptance and that the feeling of this obligation should be especially emphasized because God in the Gospel is present with His grace and gives what man of his natural ability can neither take nor give (Formula of Concord, l. c., § 47 ff.), and, on the other hand, for the same reason to inculcate the feeling of his own guilt and fault when grace is rejected.

## Two Minorities [The Synod Minority Petition]

Report of 1917, p. 460

### 1. The Norwegian Synod Minority

Communication from Prof. C. K. Preus and Rev. I. B. Torrison

A communication from the above-named men was received by the Joint Committee assembled in Minneapolis, October 10, in respect to which the following decisions were made:

From Prof. C. K. Preus and Rev. I. B. Torrison the Joint Committee has received the following overture:

"TO THE COMMITTEE ON UNION:

"Urged on by various considerations and from various quarters, the undersigned take leave to present this overture to the Committee on Union:

"There are three things in 'Settlement' [Agreement] accepted by the annual conventions of the United Church, the Hauge Synod, and the Norwegian Synod to which the minority in the Norwegian Synod finds that it cannot for conscience' sake subscribe.

"In the hope that great distress and confusion may be avoided and that we may enter the union, as we much desire, and in the hope that by the grace of God it shall still be possible for us to join with you in the furthering of the cause of the Church, we submit the question to you if it may not be possible for the three parties to accept as a settlement with us a settlement wherein these three things which cause us distress of conscience are omitted or changed; namely, Art. I of 'Settlement' [Agreement] be omitted; 'O' in the reference in Art. III shall be omitted, so that it will read: 'Art. XI, 1-20' instead of 'Art. XI, 10-20' and the last part of Section 4 shall be changed so as to read: 'or, on the other hand, weaken man's feeling of duty as regards [over against] the acceptance of grace or of guilt for the rejection of grace' instead of 'or, on the other hand, would weaken man's feeling of responsibility as regards [over against] the acceptance or rejection of grace.'

"If the Committee on Union would recommend this to the respective bodies, we entertain hope that they will vote in favor of it.

"If this overture, or proposal, is accepted, it is our intention to enter the union, aid in the realization of it, do what we can to get as many as possible into the union, and endeavor to make it a blessing to our Lutheran Church."

(Then follows the revised wording of "Settlement," as per above suggested changes, which document is known as the *Austin Settlement*.)

The invitation acknowledges the position of the Minority, inasmuch as it does not find anything therein which is contrary to Scripture and the Confession, but considers it an adequate expression of unity in faith and gives the expression "responsibility over against the acceptance or rejection of grace" a satisfactory explanation.

The footnote added to the invitation does not of course alter or contradict the content of the invitation.

The Minority hereby accepts the above invitation with the prayer that God will direct this step to a blessing for His Church.

This is the acceptance.

Since that time much has been said and written concerning these matters. Various attacks have been directed against us. Our manner of dealing (in these things) has been misinterpreted. This has pained us. We have not replied. On the one hand, we did not want to engage in a controversy with those who had stood at our side, and, on the other, we wanted to await the decision of this convention.

Now the invitation has been extended by this body, and we are convinced that it grants us what we have desired, if not according to the letter (*formaliter*) then according to the content (*realiter*) as it is expressed. And though it is true, as Rev. Holden Olsen has just stated, that there remain expressions which are wrong and should be corrected, still we do not want to assume the responsibility for a schism so long as the explanation which has been offered shows that that which has been intended, viz., the doctrine, is correct.

It is hardly necessary for me to add that I have been and am loyal to the synod and its principles; and when I now feel that I with a good conscience can join the new body, it is because I am convinced that these principles are maintained in our agreement and that we shall in our future work as in the past have the opportunity to testify to the truth.

I wish to express my thanks for the courtesy shown us, and I pray God graciously to bless our labors together.

Hereupon the assembly rose and sang the hymn "Praise to Thee and Adoration" (*Lov og tak og evig ære*), and the chairman offered a prayer of thanksgiving.

### **Constitution for the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America**

#### **Chapter I. Name, Confession, and Church Rites**

§ 1. The name of this church-body shall be: The Norwegian Lutheran Church in America.

§ 2. This church-body believes, teaches, and confesses that the Holy Scriptures, the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, are the revealed Word of God and therefore the only source and rule of faith, doctrine, and life.

§ 3. As a brief and true statement of the doctrine of the Word of God this body accepts and confesses the Symbolical Books, or confessional writings, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Norway: a) the ancient symbols: the Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian creeds; b) the unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism.

§ 4. In regard to church rites, it is left to each congregation to decide for itself. But in order that there may in general be uniformity also in the matter of church rites, this body recommends that the congregations use the ritual of the Lutheran Church of Norway, modified according to the present common usage among us.

The so-called Austin Settlement, with the preface as above, bears the signatures of C.K. Preus and I.B. Torrisson and is dated October 4, 1916, at Decorah, Iowa.

In regard to this appeal the Committee on Union submitted the following to the conventions of the three church-bodies in 1917 (see *Annual Report*, 1917, p. 463):

"The Annual Convention is expressly cognizant of the three reservations in regard to §§ 1, 3, 4 in 'Settlement' which are contained in the overture from Prof. C.K. Preus and Rev. I.B. Torrisson and declares that there is nothing in the overture which conflicts with Scripture and the Confession, but regards the stand expressed in the overture as an adequate expression of unity in faith, wherefore that group of men and congregations whose stand is maintained in the aforementioned overture are invited to join the new body on a basis of full equality and mutual fraternal recognition."

#### **From the Synodical Report, 1917**

"Prof. C.K. Preus: I request the opportunity to state that I accept the invitation which the synod now has issued to us who could not formerly join. I speak also for Rev. Torrisson and others, who have said that they would agree to this if it were accepted by the synod.

"There was perhaps no one who, when we were together at the stirring meeting last year, expected that we would attain that which has been attained. It was also unexpected that the deliberations which led to this result were inaugurated.

"Two men from the United Church, Dr. Kildahl and Professor Boe, met us, Rev. Torrison and myself, in Decorah. It was an entirely private and informal discussion. We conversed frankly with one another and did not try to gloss over anything. And without any previously organized plan we reached such agreement in that which is essential to us, namely, doctrine, that we felt we owed it to the cause and to the Church to do what we could to avoid schism, and we permitted ourselves to send in an overture to the Joint Committee (Committee on Union). The committee, however, found that they could not grant our request as it was formulated, but assured us that they, as far as the contents were concerned (*realiter*), were acceding to our wishes by a proposed resolution. This we could not accept. But the Joint Committee had elected a subcommittee to confer with us. With this subcommittee we met in Austin, and we agreed on that [document], which later on was adopted by the Committee on Union and transmitted to us in the form of an invitation to join . . . us and those who shared our position. A footnote was added by the committee, which, however, did not alter the content of the invitation.

"Inasmuch as matters had progressed thus far, we felt that we owed it to our friends to give them an account of what we had done. A meeting was called in West Hotel (Minneapolis) the 17th and 18th of January this year [1917] of those of whom we thought that they shared our position in the matter, and we placed before them the invitation. The majority of those present agreed to accept the proposed invitation and adopted the following resolution, which I owe to them to present here. The resolution reads as follows:

"In accordance with an agreement reached between the subcommittee of the Joint Committee and Prof. C. K. Preus and Rev. I. B. Torrison the Joint Committee of the three conferring synods has resolved to recommend a resolution to the respective annual conventions to extend an invitation to those individuals and congregations which share the position of the above-mentioned men to join the new body."

### Ein interessantes historisches Dokument

In einem Buche unsers verstorbenen D. Pieper fand sich ein Brief, der einige historische Bedeutung hat und darum hier mitgeteilt wird:

„Er. Hochwürden Hrn. Präses Schwan, Cleveland, Ohio, U. St. America.

„Hochwürdiger Hr. Präses!

„Unsere am 10. März in Gieberta bei Albury in Neusüdwaales tagende viktorianische luth. Zweigsynode hat mich beauftragt, mich von neuem an Sie um Zusendung eines ev.-luth. Reisepredigers zu wenden für die vielen von Südastralien eingewanderten und einwandernden Deutschen, früher Gliedern unserer Gemeinden. Diesen mir dringlich gemachten und von dem Versprechen, für Reisekosten und Versorgung des Reisepredigers aufkommen

zu wollen, begleiteten Auftrag erfülle ich hiermit, indem ich Sie herzlich ersuche, uns einen geeigneten Mann so bald wie möglich zu überweisen. Das Bedürfnis ist groß, und die notgedrungene Lösung unserer bisherigen kirchlichen Verbindung mit der Hermannsburgers Mission läßt uns die missourische Synodalkonferenz als einzige Zuflucht unsers vereinsamten australisch-lutherischen Zions übrig.

„Wenn es einer förmlichen Berufungsurkunde bedarf oder bedürfen wird, so kann solche erfolgen, sobald ich von Ihnen hören werde, daß Sie eine Person für den Dienst eines Reisepredigers, der voraussichtlich bald zum ständigen Pfarrer werden würde, geeignet und willig gefunden haben.

„Bis zu Ihrer gefälligen Entgegnung verbleibe ich Ihr in rechtem einigen Glauben verbundener

„C. W. Schürmann

„Hochkirch, Victoria, Australia, 18/3/92”

P. E. S.

### Shortened Services

TO THE EDITOR: — Anent shortened services urged by a *long* article in the *Living Church*, January 2, and a footnote suggesting that a celebration could be said in fifteen minutes instead of thirty, the following skit may be interesting. It appeared in a church-paper many years ago:

“There are some people who are always crying out for the ‘shortening of services.’ In fact, there is a real danger, if they had their way, that our services might be cut down to almost nothing or so mutilated as to be scarcely recognizable. Following is an ancient liturgical skit which appeared in a leaflet at Strassburg, in 1775.

“The suggestion is made that the clergy might say the alphabet, out of which the offices are composed and ask God to put the letters together in their right order and accept the alphabet in place of the office. The skit follows:

“**Ritus Brevissimus Recitandi Breviarium pro Itinerantibus et Scrupulosis**

“Dicatur: Pater et Ave.

“Deinde: A B C D E F G H I K L M N O P Q R S T U V X Y Z.

“V. Per hoc alphabetum notum,

“R. Componitur Breviarium totum.

“Tempore Paschali, dicitur. Alleluia.

“OREMUS

“DEUS, qui ex viginti quattuor literis totam sacram Scripturam et breviarium istud componi voluisti, iunge, disiunge et accipe ex his viginti quattuor literis matutinis cum laudibus, primam, tertiam, sextam, nonam, vespas et completorium; per Christum Dominum. Amen.

“Signat se dicens: Sapienti pauca.

“V. In pace in idipsum.

“R. Dormiam et requiescam.”

Portland, Oreg.

(REV.) E. H. CLARK

(*The Living Church*, April 3, 1937)



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**Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches**


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**I. Amerika**

**How Much of the Bible is True?** — That is the question the Modernist who rejects the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures has to answer. The professor of the University of Chicago Dr. H. L. Willett, who conducts the Question Box in the *Christian Century*, was confronted with this problem when a reader asked, "How much of the Bible is to be taken as factual and trustworthy, and how is one to make sure of the portions that are to be believed?" Certainly an unavoidable question for all who refuse to believe what the Bible says about itself. The answer of Professor Willett will hardly be found satisfactory by his correspondent. He says of the Old Testament Scriptures: "They embody tradition, folk-lore, and imaginative material as well as authentic recitals of actual incidents. They even include works of fiction, such as the books of Ruth, Jonah, and Esther, as well as fables and parables, such as those spoken by Jesus. A whole world of mythology lies back of the literature of the Old Testament, and to this frequent reference is made in the poetry and preaching of the Scriptures. One is not likely to be misled in discriminating between statements of fact and the obvious fiction of illustrative references." This is a polite way of saying that there is no criterion which can be employed with the assurance that one is differentiating between truth and fiction. The concluding paragraph of Professor Willett's statement reads: "It is evident that it is not only the privilege but the duty of the student of Scripture to exercise his right of judgment regarding the statements of the Bible, remembering the origin and character of the record and the fact that the freedom to estimate the historical and moral value of all parts of the book, the right of private judgment, is the foundation-stone of Protestantism. Beyond this the introductions and commentaries offer useful suggestions." There you are in a bog, bewildered and wondering who had the audacity to offer you light and instead of it gave you darkness. A.

**Is Jesus Christ the God-Man or the Divine Man?** — In his book *Jesus Christ Our Lord* (published by the Abingdon Press, 1937) Dr. Otto Justice Baab of the faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill., applies a long series of honorific epithets to Jesus. He calls Jesus "the Son of God," "the veritable Son of God," "the very Son of God." He speaks of "Jesus' kinship with God," of "Christ's divine nature," "the very divinity of Christ," abhors "the denial of the divinity of Christ," and insists that "it is the high and holy purpose of the Church to demonstrate without equivocation the divinity of Christ, its Lord." But he will not call Jesus God. He declares on page 41: "It is historically possible and reasonable to believe that Jesus regarded Himself as a divine being. . . . But this is quite different from ascribing deity to Jesus. . . . It is hard to imagine His acceptance of the Johannine idea of a metaphysical oneness between Himself and Deity." So all that the high-sounding titles which the Modernist confers upon Jesus import is that Jesus "is the embodiment of the greatest power in the universe,"

"the most significant embodiment of the divine power of integrating understanding in all of history," "the divinity that was in His soul expressed itself essentially in an attitude of understanding, all-embracing love." We had read the book thus far for the purpose of review, but at page 57 we stalled. "We mean, then, that Jesus is so uniquely and concretely related to the power we call God that His divinity is beyond dispute. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. In Him the power of mutual and sacrificial love which is God has come to men. After all the ages when various levels of existence in the evolutionary process were struggling to incarnate the principle of mutual helpfulness, blindly at first and then in the dim beginnings of conscious life, there finally came to earth a human personality in whom this power had full sway and effectiveness. No one save the Son of God could so sublimely and completely surrender Himself as an instrument of this divine power." We are stalled here for the present. We shall not write the review till several points that here perplex us are settled. First, have these wonderful powers of the evolutionary process come to a standstill? Could they not produce a second Jesus? And with the power of Jesus' influence working for nineteen hundred years, why are not beings produced that excel Jesus? Has the evolutionary force exhausted itself centuries ago? Again, what a wicked force must inhere in the evolutionary process to produce a being like Jesus, the acme of humanity, who "regarded Himself as a divine being"! Evolution, producing the noblest creature, has produced the most wicked creature! Then, too, we cannot understand why Dr. Baab should use the phrase "there finally came to earth." It has sense when we speak of the incarnation of the Son of God. It has sense, in what is called on this same page the "Jewish" conception, that "the Son of God was a heavenly creature set aside for a special mission to men." But one who looks upon Jesus as a mere man might say that He "appeared on earth" but should not say He "came to earth." One who does not accept the Biblical account should refrain from using Biblical phrases. E.

**A Warning Concerning Unionism.**—When in New Haven, Conn., Episcopalians met representatives of eleven other Protestant bodies, a joint Communion was held, which was justly criticized by the *Living Church*. The editor of that paper writes: "We must take this opportunity to state as emphatically and unequivocally as possible our conviction that 'joint Communion services' in which priests of the Episcopal Church participate together with ministers of Protestant denominations are a wrong approach to the subject of Christian unity. We felt that the united Communion service at Oxford was a mistake, even though it had such high authority for it as the Archbishop of Canterbury. We feel equally that the joint Communion service in Connecticut was a mistake so far as the participation of Anglicans is concerned, and we hope that it will not be allowed to stand as a precedent. Intercommunion is the goal of the unity movement, not simply a step along the way. The Episcopal Church is a part of Catholic Christendom. Catholics have a very definite concept of the Holy Communion, a concept that we believe in all sincerity to be the only true interpretation of our Lord's own teaching. We believe in the real, objective presence of our Lord

in the blessed Sacrament of the Altar when the Holy Communion is properly celebrated by a properly ordained priest of the Catholic Church. We believe that our Lord is present in the blessed Sacrament, not in some vague, subjective sense, but actually and objectively, quite as truly as He was present in the manger in Bethlehem or on the cross of Calvary. He is to be worshiped on His altar-throne just as the shepherds and the Wise Men worshiped Him in Palestine and as the angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven worship Him there. Protestants do not hold this belief. Not only do they not believe in the necessity of a sacrificing priesthood for the celebration of the Holy Communion, but most of them do not mean the same thing that we do by this Sacrament. In Baptist theology, for example, the Lord's Supper is not even described as a Sacrament, but simply as an ordinance. Certain Liberals see in it nothing but a memorial of a historic event. Some even go so far as to share the Unitarian denial that Christ is God and so cannot believe that He is present in the blessed Sacrament. When we join with our Protestant brethren in the celebration of what purports to be a united Communion service, when actually it means one thing to us, another thing to orthodox Protestants, still another to liberal Protestants, and something still different to Unitarians, we are not promoting Christian unity but simply muddying the waters and confusing the issue. Moreover, if we persist in united Communion services with Protestants, we shall endanger our relationships with the Eastern Orthodox and Old Catholics, thus disrupting the measure of unity that we have already been able to obtain with our brethren with whom we share the full Catholic faith. We wish to be as kindly and charitable in this matter as we can, but we feel that we must speak out frankly and plainly. We hope that our Protestant brethren will recognize that it is not lack of Christian charity but devotion to one of the most fundamental doctrines of our faith that animates us in so doing."

Naturally, much is to be subtracted from the above before we can subscribe to it. One wishes very much that the writer would have presented more fully his teaching on the Lord's Supper. It is evident that he believes in the real presence; but whether it is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the real presence which he accepts or that of the Lutheran Church is not quite clear. When he speaks of worshiping Jesus on His altar-throne, the fear inevitably rises in one that he holds Roman Catholic notions concerning the Sacrament. But what is commendatory in the editorial is the definiteness with which the author speaks against the joint Communion services of people who are not agreed in doctrine, not even with respect to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. How people whose teachings on the Sacrament of the Altar are conflicting can go to the Lord's Table together is indeed an enigma for all who hold that in the Church, if anywhere, the principles of honesty and sincerity should obtain.

A.

**Unionistic Make-Belief.**—The unionists try hard to minimize the differences in the way of church union. They like to play up the points of agreement. And they are satisfied with a great minimum. In an article, 'The Outlook for Church Union,' discussing the results of Oxford

and Edinburgh, the *Christian Century* of September 22, 1937, states: "Edinburgh asked: Are our differences on this point and that insurmountable barriers to union? Here was realism. And it was the kind of realism which was so honest and candid that even where the differences were insurmountable, the discussion resulted in increased mutual respect, coupled with hope that further fellowship and discussion would lead to a common understanding." However: "But this realism also led to the discovery of unsuspected margins of agreement. The discussion of the number of Sacraments is a good illustration. It was pointed out that Protestantism generally holds to two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Eastern orthodoxy holds, with Roman Catholicism, to seven; Anglicanism has left the number indeterminate, but generally agrees with the Protestant bodies in giving special place to two. However, it emerged in the discussions that we all have the equivalent of seven sacraments, and perhaps more! Certainly the Orthodox and Roman churches are not peculiar in holding marriage to be a 'divine ordinance.' Also, every clergyman of the now liturgical churches performs some act of grace for the dying, which is the equivalent of 'extreme unction.' Moreover, all churches 'ordain' their ministers. There is also in the discipline of all churches at least a suggestion of 'penance.' Confirmation is a universal practise in churches which practise infant baptism. And as for those churches which practise only adult baptism a new 'sacrament' is coming into wide use, namely, the dedication of infants and their recognition as members of the Christian community for whose care the church has peculiar responsibility." This is pathetic. E.

"Papam esse verum antichristum."—A paragraph from Dr. J. A. Dell's review of Lenski's *Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon*, published in the *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*, October, 1937, p. 73, reads: "Perhaps you are interested in 'the man of sin' in 2 Thess. 2. 'This is an apostasy (v. 3),' says Lenski. 'It is therefore to be sought in the Church visible, not outside of the Church,—not in the pagan world, in the general pagan moral decline, in Mohammedanism, in the French Revolution, in the rise and spread of Masonry, in Soviet Russia, or in lesser phenomena. We must not confuse the little antichrists with the great antichrists, the antichrists outside of the visible Church with the great Antichrist inside of it. . . . The secret beginnings were actively stirring in Paul's own time, v. 7. We may debate as to what or who still held these beginnings down at that time (τὸ κατέχον—ὁ κατέχων). In the writer's opinion the best view is that this was the Roman imperium, a force (neuter), and this force represented in the person (masculine) of the pagan emperors. This got out of the way, v. 7, when Constantine, the first Christian emperor, came to the throne. Only then did the Papacy become possible. The great apostasy is Romanism.'" Instead of quoting this paragraph from Lenski's commentary directly, we have preferred to call attention to its incorporation into the *Journal of the American Lutheran Conference*.

We cannot refrain, however, from quoting another paragraph from the commentary, on page 444 f.: "What obstructs the vision of so many

and leads them to deny that the Pope is the Antichrist is a failure to appreciate in their person the fact that justification by faith alone is the soul and center of all that is true Christianity. All other doctrines have their roots in this one. We quote Franz Pieper: 'It is true, the open unbelievers are raging enemies of the Church. But what Christians are to think of pronounced unbelievers they know. By this they are not deceived. How does it, then, come about that men are today disinclined to recognize the Pope as the Antichrist? Whence this strange and deplorable fact that nearly all late "believing" theologians hunt about for the Antichrist while he does his great and mighty work in the Church right before their eyes? *They are not established in the living knowledge of the doctrine of justification and in the importance of this doctrine for the Church.* From my own experience I must confess that in my own conscience I was not vitally convinced that the Pope is the Antichrist until, on the one hand, I realized what the doctrine of justification is and what its significance is for the Church, and, on the other hand, that the Papacy has its real essence in denying and cursing the doctrine of justification and by its show of piety and its claim to be the only saving Church binds to itself men's consciences.' (*Christliche Dogmatik*, II, 669 f.) Beyond the curse pronounced by the Council of Trent, sessio 6, canon 11, nothing can go in the way of antichristianity in the official Church: *Si quis dixerit, homines iustificari vel sola imputatione iustitiae Christi*, etc. . . . The confessional statement of the Smalcald Articles, II, Art. IV, (*Trigl.*, 475), is true: 'This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist,' etc.

By the way, while we are studying Lenski's commentary on 2 Thess. 2, we shall glance at the exposition of vv. 13 and 14: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto He called you by our Gospel." "Chose; only the middle of ἀγάω is used in the New Testament and only the simplex. The sense is much the same as though Paul had used ἐκλέγεσθαι or προορίζειν, although each verb has its own connotation. Here εἰλατο means no more than that God 'took you for Himself,' took you for His own, and in that sense 'chose you.' 'From the beginning.' . . . The sense is thus the same as 'before the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1, 4), in eternity. . . . There is no other choice, or election, save this one for salvation in connection with sanctification and faith. Some think only of final salvation (heaven), i. e., of the 'glory' mentioned in v. 14; but sanctification and faith point to 'salvation' both here and hereafter. . . . 'Ἐν (ἐν ἁγιασμῷ) does not mean 'in view of' or 'in the foreknowledge of.' . . . None were chosen by God without this connection. F. Pieper well says that sanctification and faith belong to the act of choosing and not merely to the execution of the act, as Calvinists teach. (*Christliche Dogmatik*, III, 538.) . . . What God did for the Thessalonians in time rests on His timeless act: if no choice, then no call, etc." There are statements in Lenski's commentary regarding election which are not so clear, some that are not acceptable, but here all is clear: We owe our salvation, our faith included, to the eternal election of grace. "If no choice, then no call, etc." E.

"All Scripture is Given by Inspiration of God."—We have not yet tired of transcribing portions from Lenski's commentary. It is a labor of love. From the comment on 2 Tim. 3, 16 we select the following statements: "Paul's passive *θεόπνευστος* must in some way be ruled out. Many follow the bold method: They let Paul say what he pleases; they do not believe what he says. Many that are not so bold tone down the idea of inspiration until nothing but the decorative word is left. Somehow they at least do not like to give up the word. They generally, however, speak with contempt of what they denominate 'the verbal *theory* of inspiration.' They propose a 'theory' of a totally different kind, certainly one that allows for more or less error in Holy Writ. . . . All of it presents and reveals the *fact* of inspiration, only the fact. There is no theory about it, can be none. A fact is simply to be seen as a fact, then treated as a fact, not to be dissolved into a theory. He who does the latter may lose the fact; many already have lost it.—'All Scripture' is 'writing,' *γραφή*. The pen traces words and combines these into sentences and paragraphs. These words convey the thought. Erase the words, and the thought disappears. These are not *Woerter*, vocables, but *Worte*, words expressing thoughts. This is *verbal inspiration*. It is before us on every written page of the Book. *There is no other divine inspiration*. The thoughts cannot be separated from the words, which are its vehicles. To speak of an inspiration of thought that is *not* an inspiration of the words is to disregard what the Scriptures show us as a fact. *Τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου*, 'the thing that was uttered or spoken by the Lord' (Matt. 1, 22), was uttered in words, Yahveh uttered them. Were these utterances fallible, errant in any way, in any word or expression? Does Yahveh ever err? 'Thy Word is truth,' *ἀλήθεια*, John 17, 17. 'Which things also we speak, not in words (*λόγοι*) taught of human wisdom, but taught of the Spirit,' 1 Cor. 2, 13. The very *λόγοι* were taught by the Spirit by verbal inspiration, they are inerrant in every word, unless we intend to charge the Lord and His Spirit with errancy, fallibility."

E.

**The Harassed Presbyterian Church of America.**—The troubles of this new organization, led by Dr. Machen till his lamented death, January 1, are not few. A group has left it to organize a new body to be called the "Bible Presbyterian Synod." This synod, as the *Presbyterian Tribune* states, is intending to stand by the Independent Board, while the year-old Presbyterian Church of America has abandoned the Independent Board and taken steps to form its own committee on foreign missions. One cause of the dissension undoubtedly is that the men who are at the head of the Bible Presbyterian Synod movement are premillenarians, who, while they accept the Westminster Confession of Faith and the catechisms, intend "to amend these standards in any particular in which the premillennial teaching of the Scripture may be held to be obscured." Another reason why the Presbyterian Church of America severed its relations with the Independent Board is said to have been the fact that some of the leaders of the Independent Board had not become members of the Presbyterian Church of America. We have here a plain demonstration of what unhealthy enthusiasm (*Schwaermerei*) will lead to.

A.



**Developments at Princeton Seminary.**— Under this heading *Christianity Today* (November, 1937) reports with undisguised fear two recent developments at Princeton Seminary which show that the liberal elements in control of the seminary are trying to keep Presbyterian conservatism out of both the management and the teaching force of Princeton. In the first place, Dr. Robert E. Speer has been elected to succeed Dr. W. L. McEwan as president of the Board of Trustees, and this must be taken as a step favoring the Auburn Affirmation group. Dr. Speer is the first layman to be made president of the Board of Control of the educational activities of the seminary. But what is even worse is the fact that on October 12 the Board elected the Rev. Dr. E. G. Homrighausen to succeed the late Harold L. Donnelly as professor of Christian Education. Dr. Homrighausen is at present pastor of the Carrollton Avenue Church (Evangelical and Reformed) in Indianapolis and lecturer on Church History in the College of Religion of Butler University. The liberal stand of this minister is proved by *Christianity Today* from his recent book *Christianity in America*, from which it quotes the following modernistic statements with reference to the inspiration of the Bible: "The old idea of an infallible Bible, inspired in every jot and tittle, which is often associated with preaching, has run its course." (P. 105.) "While in many respects that scholarship [critical] has been destructive, in a much larger sense it has liberated us from all these notions of an infallible book." (P. 118.) "Few intelligent Protestants can still hold to the idea that the Bible is an infallible book; that it contains no linguistic errors, no historical discrepancies, no antiquated scientific assumptions, not even bad ethical standards. Some might still claim for the 'original copies' of the Bible an infallible character, but this only begs the question and makes such Christian apologetics more ridiculous in the eyes of sincere men." (P. 121.) "The Bible is not the actual Word of God, but merely a human witness to what the Word of God did in and with men and history. The words of the Bible are not to be believed because they are in the Bible. In reading the Bible, there comes to me a strange language, there confronts me a real God, and there emerges before me something about life that I do not discover anywhere else. It is because the Scriptures do this that they are 'sacred.' Not all the Bible does this for me. There is much in the Bible like chaff, or rather like the seemingly insignificant parts of a watch. There is a residue in the Bible that remains intact in spite of all its inaccuracies, its antedated cosmology and science." (P. 136.) In closing the report, *Christianity Today* remarks rather mildly: "With these statements before us, it seems difficult, if not impossible, to suppose that Dr. Homrighausen holds that view of Holy Scripture to which each and every member of the Board of Trustees and faculty of Princeton Seminary is required to subscribe." Dr. Homrighausen, by the way, is a member of the critical wing of Barthian rationalism.

J. T. M.

**Triennial Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church.**— This convention, which met in Cincinnati in October, 1937, has attracted a good deal of attention. Some of the chief news items reported in the religious press concerning it are the following. The former presiding bishop, Rev. James De Wolf Perry, was not reelected. The new pre-

siding bishop is Bishop Tucker of Virginia, a man sixty-three years old, who served prominently as missionary and Christian leader in Japan. His election is held as indicating that a new era of missionary advance will be inaugurated by his Church. "Under the new plan of organization the presiding bishop will have a new place of leadership in the formulation of the policies of the Church, for he will be president of the National Council and will also be more directly in charge of the Forward Movement. It is likely also that he will head the new commission on strategy and policy." (*The Living Church*.)

The proposed World Council, which is to continue the work of the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences, was enthusiastically endorsed, and provision was made for the sending of one clerical and one lay delegate to the preliminary conference to be held in Holland in May, 1938. With respect to the office of the presiding bishop it was decided that he should be elected for life, that is, till he reaches the retiring age of sixty-eight. The presiding bishop was instructed to turn over the supervision of his particular diocese as much as possible to his coadjutor, that is, the assistant bishop, in order that he might give all of his time to the work of the Church at large. With respect to marriage and divorce several attempts were made to alter the present canon of the Church, "which permits remarriage by the Church only in the case of the innocent party in a divorce granted on grounds of adultery." One group tried to put the decision of the question whether a divorced person seeking another marriage might be granted this request into the hands of the diocesan bishop, who after consultation with the parochial minister would have to say whether the marriage could be authorized. Another group likewise sought to invest the bishop with the authority of decision in such cases, limiting them, however, to divorce obtained on the ground of adultery. Both proposed alterations were defeated. While one must applaud the action of the convention inasmuch as it refused to yield to Liberalism, it is regrettable that the Protestant Episcopal Church is not adhering to the full teachings of the Scriptures on this point, recognizing that not only adultery, but likewise malicious desertion constitutes a valid reason for obtaining a divorce. It must have been very impressive when it was announced that the special collection of the woman's auxiliary, gathered at a service in connection with the convention, amounted to \$861,000. The report of the Joint Commission on Approaches to Unity says that a conference was held with representatives of the Augustana Synod, at which "a surprising unanimity on the subjects of the Holy Scriptures, the historic creeds, and the Sacraments" was revealed. The report continues: "Difference on the matter of holy orders was frankly confessed and the way left open for further discussions. Numerous suspicions were allayed, and many misconceptions were cleared away. Progress will be necessarily slow in this direction, but the prospect is encouraging." The Commission found itself largely in agreement with the Commission on Unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church and will continue its discussions with it. It strongly recommends reunion with the "separated brethren," the Reformed Episcopal Church. As to its discussions with the Northern Presbyterians, the commission proposed that both churches, the Protestant Episcopal and the Presbyterian Church

in the United States of America, should accept the following declaration: "The two churches, one in the faith of the Lord Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, recognizing the Holy Scriptures as the supreme rule of faith, accepting the two Sacraments ordained by Christ, and believing that the visible unity of Christian churches is the will of God, hereby firmly declare their purpose to achieve organic union between the respective churches. Upon the basis of this agreement the two churches agree to take immediate steps toward the framing of plans whereby this may be achieved." This proposal was accepted and will be communicated to the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. by the presiding bishop.

A.

"A Significant Statement by a Liberal Editor."—As a "significant statement by a liberal editor" *Christianity Today* (October, 1937) quotes the following editorial comment by Dr. Charles C. Morrison of the *Christian Century*: "For more than a hundred years the Church has been engaged in the solemn business of forgetting its Gospel. It has not repudiated or denied it but has allowed it to be so mixed and adulterated with the wisdom of this world that its own unique testimony has been blurred with ambiguity. The fundamentals of the Christian faith have been covered over with secularism, and our churchmanship has proceeded upon the assumption that the Church's contribution to human life must be made in terms of prevalent philosophies which have no relation to the Christian faith." This brief description of the insidious work of Modernism is so well founded that it merits careful consideration. What Dr. Morrison here so nicely declares in his excellent analysis of the case is precisely the course which the high dignitaries of modern rationalism, such as Schleiermacher and Ritschl, as well as their many imitators have followed: *they have mixed and adulterated the Gospel with the wisdom of this world!* Not so adequate is what Dr. Morrison writes next: "The rise of totalitarian states and the manifest inability of secular society to get itself together, especially since the World War, have set Christian men to the task of digging down to the foundations of their faith, with the result that a conception of the Church and of the Gospel is emerging which transcends the categories of social reform in the secular sense and exhibits Christianity as the only savior of the world." While it is true that the World War and its aftermath are partly responsible for the bankruptcy of extreme rationalism, the real "digging down to the foundations of faith" is, properly speaking, the good fruit of the testimony of scores of faithful witnesses throughout the world, of *Bekenntnisfronten* which took their task seriously. Incidentally, the "new conception of the Church and of the Gospel, transcending the categories of social reform in the secular sense" is largely only a "new rationalism," not essentially different from its unlamented predecessor, just a new way of "covering fundamentals with secularism."

J. T. M.

**When Patriotism Becomes Worship.**—The *Sunday-school Times* (September 4, 1937) under this heading calls attention to the seriousness of the problem arising from the fact that the Japanese government insists upon the participation of Christians, especially in Korea and Man-

churia, in the Shinto festivities. The *Times* has discussed the problem before and in the issue mentioned restates and reaffirms its position that under no condition must Christians join in these rites of pagan worship. Because of his uncompromising stand in the matter Dr. George McCune was forced from the presidency of the Union Christian College and the principalship of the Presbyterian Boys Academy at Pyeng Yang and obliged to leave Korea. So far only one church-body has definitely taken a stand on the question whether Christians in Japan, Korea, and Manchuria, and especially the teachers and pupils in the Christian mission-schools and colleges there, may bow at the shrines, namely, the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Regarding the claim that such Shinto obeisance is merely political in nature and not in any way religious the *Sunday-school Times* writes: "The Japanese government regards the Shinto shrines as the very foundation of its policy of national patriotic education. Around the shrines has been gathered all the folklore and tradition of Japanese nationalism. They are regarded as the shades of the spirits of the emperors, the mythological ancestors of the country, and the heroes of the empire. To do obeisance at the shrine is therefore, according to the government, but the normal and rightful duty of every Japanese subject, and shrine attendance is to be required of all pupils in schools as a part of the necessary training in loyalty and patriotism. It is natural that such policies should receive special emphasis at a time when extreme nationalism is epidemic around the world, and it is evident that no let-up is contemplated. Of course, the government takes the position that there is nothing in all this that should prove in any way embarrassing to the Christian schools, as, according to its claim, the shrines are purely patriotic in nature and have no religious significance. It is at this point that the difficulties begin, for our missionaries are unable so to regard Shinto shrines." Among the objections of the missionaries the following are the most convincing: 1. There is a great volume of Japanese opinion and scholarship supporting the view that Shinto is a religion. 2. Government spokesmen apply all the terms of religion to the cult. 3. The objects of veneration have ascribed to them the attributes of deity. 4. Shinto has always been classified as a religion. 5. There are distinctly religious elements in the ritual. 6. Terms of religion are regularly employed. The matter certainly is a most serious one, and one can readily understand the appeal of the *Times*: "Surely Christian people everywhere should unite in prayer for the missionaries and for their boards at home that all may be true to the will and Word of God in this crisis time."

J. T. M.

**Heathen Thefts from the Bible.**—Under this heading the *Sunday-school Times* (Nov. 20, 1937) argues a most important apologetic fact which the Christian minister or teacher may occasionally use in his defense of the Bible. The article is too long to be quoted here in full, but even a few excerpts will suffice to acquaint the reader with the weighty matter. We read: "Parallels to Scripture in Asiatic literature have been diligently sought out in an attempt to disprove the uniqueness of Christian ethics and of Scripture revelation and even in order to trace a Buddhist or other origin of our Lord's words and miracles. The error

in these calculations is that they often reverse history. What is brought forward as a heathen parallel or lofty teaching is quite often of Christian origin, modified and reduced. Here, as so often, critics fail to take into account the fluidity of the ancient world. Christian missions entered India at a very early date. The tradition that Thomas went to India and preached Christ in the kingdom of Gundophares was treated as legendary until, in the last century, it was discovered that a monarch of that name ruled in the Punjab at that very time. In A. D. 68 a colony of ten thousand Jews emigrated *en masse* from Palestine to the Malabar coast, and in A. D. 190 Pantaenus, who was sent to India to teach the Brahmans, found a Christian church already established there. These and other historical indications have their fatal correspondences in Buddhist literature. The Jakata stories of a disciple walking on the water and of Buddha making one loaf feed more than five hundred people are of post-Christian date and obviously a theft from the gospel narrative. The fact that Buddha as well as Christ preached on mountain tops appears from the *Lalita Vistara*; but this writing, according to Rhys Davids, is not earlier than the sixth century A. D. The Yale Sanscritist, the late Prof. E. W. Hopkins, with the best of will could find only five cogent parallels between Buddha and Christ, of the fifty collected. And even these five are either not close parallels or are post-Christian in date, such as that our Lord saw Nathanael under a fig-tree and that Buddha also attained enlightenment under a fig-tree, or that, when Buddha was a babe, the old Yogi Asita flew down from the Himalayas to prophesy the child's further greatness, as Simeon prophesied in the Temple. Dr. Fosdick has ignorantly tried to parallel the miraculous births of Buddha and of Christ. But pre-Christian Buddhists never affirmed that Buddha was born of a virgin; and to compare the story of the white elephant entering the body of Buddha's mother, later to pass out of her side in the shape of Buddha, with the lovely and convincing story of the first chapter of Luke, is an affront both to reason and to good taste. The *Bhagavad Gita* ('The Lord's Recitation') is unquestionably the best that heathenism has to offer in the way of literature. The *Gita* is the story of Krishna, and in its original form it somewhat antedates the Christian era. It was, however, *remodeled and rewritten in post-Christian times*, and in meter and language was made wholly different from the ancient Upanishads. The character of Krishna, too, is entirely altered, and Christian elements are introduced. He is thus represented as sin-forgiving, a conception wholly alien to Asian religion. This process of stealing from the New Testament is obvious in other Hindu literature, where Krishna is described as the guardian of the flock, the sinless God, the Lord of the world who consented to die that he might fulfil the word of seers; also in the story of the Stake Saint, unjustly impaled with thieves. In the later *Puranas* (all post-Christian) Krishna is man-God, born in a stable, one who later restored a widow's son to life, healed a cripple, was anointed with a box of ointment, and so on. The *Bhagavad Gita* parallels many Scripture-passages so closely as to make the source of its quotations unquestionable."

The *Times* then quotes a large number of passages in parallel and concludes: "Here is an extensive and convincing plagiarism of the ideas

and expressions found in John's gospel. But how flat and colorless they have become in the transition! Our Lord spake as one having authority; but there is no accent of authority in these stolen heathen maxims, although they come in the last analysis from the King Himself. His words were gracious; these are insipid. The wisdom of the East, in this instance, is neither wise nor Eastern. To sentimentalize over it is to leave the living waters for broken cisterns. Dr. Hu Shih, the 'father of the Renaissance movement in China,' who is said to have the finest mind in China today, says: 'China has nothing [in her civilization and religion] worth preserving. You foreigners who tell China that she has, are doing her disservice. You but add to her false pride.' This is equally true of India."

J. T. M.

**Deaths.**—On September 30, 1937, the United Lutheran Church of America lost one of its prominent members through the death of Rev. Dr. Augustus Steimle, pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Advent, New York City. He had been a representative of the U. L. C. at the recent World Conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh.—Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, suffered the loss of Carl Doving, a prominent hymnologist, who died October 2, 1937.

**Brief Items.**—How the Edinburgh Conference disposed for itself of the differences in the doctrine held by its members touching the Lord's Supper is shown by this paragraph of the official report: "We all believe that Christ is truly present in the Eucharist, though as to how that presence is manifested and realized we may differ. Every precise definition of the presence is found to be a limiting thing, and the attempt to formulate such definitions and to impose them on the Church has itself been the cause of disunity in the past. . . . We are throughout in the realm of spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that the blessing and the gift are given. The presence, which we do not try to define, is a spiritual presence." The conference here was frankly unionistic. With respect to Baptism, after using the ambiguous language "Baptism is a sign and seal of Christian discipleship in obedience to our Lord's command," the report says: "Since the time available precluded the extended discussion of such points as baptismal regeneration, the admission of unbaptized persons to Holy Communion, and the relation of confirmation to Baptism, we are unable to express an opinion how far they would constitute obstacles to proposals for a united Church."

The Episcopal convention held in Cincinnati in October occupied itself with some political matters. It advocated liberalization of the Japanese Exclusion Act and passed resolutions opposing Communism and the Totalitarian State. Almost 450 separate resolutions are said to have been considered during the twelve legislative days of the convention. The Federal war on syphilis was sanctioned; but the convention did not endorse the view that both parties requesting a church marriage should be required to present a medical certificate showing that they are free from venereal diseases. It did not endorse intinction with respect to Holy Communion. It advocated that candidates for the ministry should be given "medical, physical, and nervous examinations."



When the Disciples of Christ, the followers of Alexander Campbell, recently held their international convention in Columbus, O., 2,500 delegates were in attendance. When a resolution was submitted which stated that labor has the right to organize and to bargain collectively concerning hours, wages, and conditions of work, opposition to it was voiced by some of the members, who declared that it was divisive, that it too specifically tied the Church to a certain course, and that it would not be of any value. Nevertheless it was adopted.

"Unitarians were scored by their new president (Rev. Frederick M. Eliot) for having spent entirely too much time in talking about social action. Passing resolutions at conferences too often was a salve to the conscience and a substitute for doing something. Also, Unitarian social pronouncements were too much an imitation of the statements of other bodies. The liberal Church should work out its own methods in accordance with its own peculiar genius." — *Christian Century*.

On account of its gripping language a paragraph from a speech delivered by Dean Umphrey Lee of the Vanderbilt School of Religion in view of the coming bicentennial of the Methodist Church is here quoted: "Anniversaries are dangerous, and Methodism must decide whether it is a movement or a monument. We are talking of unification; but if there is nothing to unite, there is no need for uniting. As another once said: 'There is no point in changing the labels of empty bottles.'"

As the *Christian Century* reports, Lord Camrose of London and the paper of which he is the editor-in-chief, the *Daily Telegraph*, sued a Fascist paper called the *Action* for libel. Lord Camrose had been attacked on the ground that he was of Jewish origin and a conspirator in international Jewish intrigues. With respect to the first charge the evidence submitted consisted in the marriage of Lord Camrose's nephew to a Rothschild. For the second no support could be adduced. The jury decided that the *Action* should pay Lord Camrose 12,500 pounds and the *Daily Telegraph* 7,500 pounds.

When the Unitarians met in Niagara Falls for their Sixth General Conference, they were addressed by Rabbi Hillel Silver of Cleveland, who spoke to them on Kant's "Categorical Imperative." And then some people are surprised that the Unitarian denomination does not grow more rapidly.

Glasgow, Scotland, in September entertained the Sixth International Spiritualist Congress. Seventeen countries were represented, among them India. One group of the members, it is reported, listened to papers on the scientific aspect of Spiritualism, while the other took up matters pertaining to the religious side. This great delusion evidently still has much vitality.

A.

## II. Ausland

Der Unionismus der lutherischen Landeskirchen. Die „Ev.-Luth. Freikirche“ vom 19. September 1937 schreibt: „In den Hallenser Beschlüssen von diesem Jahre hat die calvinistische Richtung in der Bekennenden Kirche, die Richtung der Bruderräte, den Lutherischen in Deutschland das Recht zu einer selbstständigen lutherischen Kirche rund weg abgesprochen. Die Bruderräte

haben das Barth'sche „Barmer Bekenntnis“ für die entscheidende Norm erklärt, nach der auch die lutherischen Bekenntnisse auszuliegen sind. Sie haben jeder Kirche die Geltung als Kirche und jedem Pfarrer die Geltung als evangelischer Pfarrer abgesprochen, wenn sie sich nicht in diesem Sinne auf das Barmer Bekenntnis verpflichten lassen. Darauf hat nun der „Rat der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands“, der innerhalb der Bekenntnenden Kirche die sogenannten lutherischen Kirchen Deutschlands (Bayern, Sachsen, Württemberg, Hannover usw.) zusammenfassen will, erklärt, daß er die Hallenser Beschlüsse der Bruderräte nicht billige, daß er besonders auch die Lehrverpflichtung auf das Barmer Bekenntnis für die Pfarrer der sogenannten lutherischen Kirche ablehne. . . . So müßten diese beiden Kirchen [die Bruderratskirche und die lutherischen Kirchen] sich denn doch eigentlich, wenn sie aufrichtig und wahrhaftig sein wollten, voneinander trennen. Aber siehe da, die sogenannten lutherischen Landeskirchen des Lutherischen Rats bleiben trotz alledem in der „deutschen Evangelischen Kirche“ mit den Bruderräten zusammen. . . . So haben sich denn auch kirchlich, wie das Blatt „Lutherische Kirche“ meldet (S. 138), der Lutherische Rat und die Bruderräte in Kassel zu „gemeinsamem Handeln zusammengefunden“. Man kann also die jetzt häufige Kritik landeskirchlicher Führer an den Bruderräten und an Prof. Barth's Theologie gar nicht ernst nehmen. Im Grunde sind sie doch wieder darin eins, unter allen Umständen „die Volkskirche zu erhalten“, und bleiben zu diesem Zweck unter der Führung der Bruderräte doch wieder einmütig zusammen. Wo aber bleibt da die Wahrheit?“

In dem Artikel „Zum Verständnis von Halle“\*) geht Herbert Volken auf die in der „N. G. Z. N.“ und sonst erscheinende Kritik der Hallenser Beschlüsse ein und schreibt unter anderem: „Es gibt noch keine Lutherische Kirche Deutscher Nation. Es ist unsachlich, so zu tun, als ob es schon eine Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands in einigermaßen sichtbaren Umrissen gäbe, die schon über einen übereinstimmenden Bekenntnisstand und entsprechend allgemein anerkannte Kirchenordnungen und Leitungen verfügte und an die sich die altpreussische Kirche nur angliedern müßte, um den Anforderungen an eine lutherische Kirche zu entsprechen. . . . Wir haben an die Kritiker der altpreussischen Union aus angeblich konfessionell einheitlich gelagerten Landeskirchen zu viel Gegenfragen nach der Bekenntnisbestimmtheit ihrer landeskirchlichen Ordnungen und Entscheidungen zu richten. . . . Man lege nicht der Hallenser Behandlung der Konfessionsfrage zur Last, daß es nun verschiedene Arten von Lutheranern gibt. Die gibt es auch außerhalb Preußens. . . . Allen Ernstes vertritt keine lutherische Landeskirche die kirchentrennenden Aussagen etwa der F. C. so, wie sie von den Unterzeichnern der F. C. vertreten worden sind. . . . Wo in Deutschland wird Abendmahlstrennung heute nicht bloß idealiter behauptet, sondern tatsächlich aufrechterhalten? Wo wird das Abendmahlsverständnis der Abendmahls Gäste geprüft und danach eine Entscheidung über die Möglichkeit der Gemeinschaft getroffen? Wo unterscheidet sich in diesem Punkte die Praxis der Abendmahlszulassung irgend einer deutschen Landeskirche von der in Altpreußen üblichen? . . . Es war schon gewissensschärfend, als einer, der das Recht dazu hatte, uns fragte, wie

\*) „Evangelische Theologie“, Heft 10, Oktober 1937, S. 357—378. (Verlag von Chr. Kaiser, München.)

viele Theologen denn in der Deutschen Evangelischen Kirche auch nur wüßten um die theologische und soteriologische Bedeutung der christologischen Differenzpunkte, die für die Kontroverse über die leibliche Realpräsenz bedeutungsvoll sind, wie viele die Lehre von der *manducatio impiorum* schriftgemäß zu erweisen vermöchten, die rechte Beziehung von Gesetz und Evangelium in der Verflüchtigung von der Schrift aus herzustellen wüßten usw.? . . . Diejenigen Konfessionsverwandten, die von außerhalb der altpreussischen Kirche mit guten Ratschlägen oder vereinfachender Kritik zusehen, möchten sich doch durch die Beschlüsse von Halle fragen lassen, ob das in den Landeskirchen geformte Luthertum der Ruhe und Erneuerung weniger bedarf als die Verkennende Kirche in Altpreußen.“

Das *sola fide* in Luthers Schmalkaldischen Artikeln. Unter der Überschrift „Luthers reformatorisches Bekenntnis in den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln“ behandelt Prof. D. Dörne-Leipzig in der „A. E. Z. R.“ nebst andern auch die hohe Bedeutung des *sola fide* in den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln, dieses eminenten Vorzugartikels in der christlichen Lehre, worauf „steht alles, was wir wider den Papst, Teufel und Welt lehren und leben“. In seiner Darlegung betont D. Dörne etwas, was auch wir uns immer wieder aus Schrift und Bekenntnis klarmachen müssen, damit nicht etwa in unsern Gedanken und Predigten trotz allen theoretischen Festhaltens an dem *sola gratia* doch Ungereimtes und Falsches unterlaufen möge. Wir lesen da (verkürzt): „Der Glaube ist der einzige Weg, auf dem wir zu Gott kommen können. . . Glaube, das heißt vor allem hier die Bankrotterklärung aller menschlichen Werke [von uns hervorgehoben]. Dieser Glaube aber — ist er nicht selber ein ‚Werk des Menschen‘? Gewiß, ich muß glauben; ich muß ja sagen zu dem, was Gott getan hat. Aber das ist für Luther keine Leistung. Für Luther ist der Glaube nicht eine fromme oder eine heroische Haltung, zu der wir uns aufschwingen. Es besteht die Gefahr, daß wir, wo von Glauben und Gläubigkeit die Rede ist, uns darunter einen solchen edlen Aufschwung der Seele vorstellen. Aber Luther versteht den Glauben nicht von seinem Subjekt, sondern ganz und gar von seinem Objekt, seinem Gegenstand, her. Was Glaube ist, das bestimmt sich ausschließlich von dem her, woran ich glaube. Es bestimmt sich hier also von Gott, von Gottes erlösender Tat in Christus, her. Der christliche Glaube schwebt und schwingt nicht frei in der Unendlichkeit seiner seelischen Bewegung, sondern er klammert sich fest, er ‚hangt‘, wie Luther sagt, an Gottes Wort und Gottes Tat. So bindet Luthers Hauptartikel meisterhaft und mit einer kaum wieder erreichten Klarheit beides zusammen: das ganze ‚objektive‘ Werk der Erlösung und das ganz persönliche Ja, das der Glaube zu diesem Werk sprechen muß, damit die Erlösung ihm gelte. Dieser Glaube ist der große, der allein probehaltige Trost der Menschen. . . Der römisch-katholische Heilsweg läßt den Menschen ewig in peinvoller Ungewißheit über sein Heil, eben deshalb, weil hier alles auf der Tat, auf der Kraft, des Menschen steht. Trost und Gewißheit haben wir nur dann, wenn wir die Sache unserer Seligkeit ganz Gott, ganz Christus, befehlen. Das ist das eine, was Luther vom Glauben zu sagen hat. Noch stärker ist in unsern Artikeln aber das andere betont: Allein dieser Glaube gibt Gott und seinem Christus die Ehre, die ihm gebührt. Indem er dem Glauben Bahn macht wider alle menschliche und

kirchliche Werkerei, streitet Luther — keine Spur weniger unerbittlich als Calvin — für Gottes und Christi Ehre. Entweder wir lassen Christus unsern alleinigen Heiland und Retter sein, oder wir haben Christus schon gelästert und verleugnet, selbst wenn wir ihm dem Namen nach alle seine Ehrentitel lassen und vielleicht gar selber betuernd geben. Das ist die erschreckende Möglichkeit, die Luther gerade hier in den Schmalkaldischen Artikeln schonungslos aufdeckt als die ärgste Sünde des Menschen, als die auf den Gipfel getriebene Gottlosigkeit der Kirche: daß man scheinbar Gott ehrt und Christus anbetet und in Wirklichkeit Gott und Christus verachtet und vom Thron stürzt, indem man seine Werke, seine Buße, seinen guten Willen an die Stelle setzt, die ihm gehört. So wird aus dem lebendigen Herrn der Bibel ein harmloser Ehrenpräsident, der schließlich zu allem ja sagt, was wir tun, was uns gefällt. Auch diese Möglichkeit ist nicht nur in der römischen Welt wirklich geworden. Auch mit dieser Wahrheit spricht Luther mitten hinein in unsere Welt und in unser Gewissen."

In einem vorigen Passus schreibt D. Dörne: „Das alles [besonders, daß „der Weg der guten Werke hoffnungslos verbaut ist“] sagt Luther zunächst gegen Rom. Aber er hat es wahrlich nicht nur gegen Rom sagen wollen. Wir sind an die reformatorische Ablehnung der römischen „Wertheiligkeit“ fast allzusehr gewöhnt. Wir hören unwillkürlich Luthers Sätze als nur gegen die Torheit und den Aberglauben des damaligen römischen Weichs und Ablasswesens gerichtet, und wir vergessen darüber ganz zu fragen, inwiefern sein Bannwort wider die guten Werk auch uns treffen könnte. Gegenwartigkeit bekommt Luthers Lehre erst dann, wenn wir anfangen zu merken, daß dieser Glaube an die Selbstrechtfertigungskraft, an die natürliche Güte und Vollendungsfähigkeit des Menschen, gegen den Luther hier sein Schwert schwingt, derselbe Glaube ist, der auch einem jeden von uns im Blut liegt. . . . Wir müßten aufhören, unsere Frömmigkeit und Rechtsschaffenheit zum Schlupfwinkel unserer heimlichen Selbstsicherheit zu machen, und müßten scharfe Augen haben, diese hartnäckige Selbstsicherheit des Menschen zu entdecken und aufzustöbern in allem, wessen Menschen sich rühmen und trösten. Erst dann hätten wir Luther verstanden. Erst dann wäre sein schmalkaldisches Bekenntnis unser Bekenntnis."

Da wir Menschen von Natur alle Pelagianer sind und unser verderbtes Fleisch bis zum Tod synergistisch eingestellt bleibt, so ist die von D. Dörne gegebene Warnung allerdings auch uns ins Gewissen gerufen. Der seine Artikel zeigt klar, wie sehr es gefruchtet hat, daß man sich in diesem Jubiläumsjahr die Schmalkaldischen Artikel drüben wieder neu angesehen hat. Leider hat man im allgemeinen hierzulande dem Jubiläum weniger Interesse entgegengebracht als in Deutschland. Zur Ehre dient uns dies durchaus nicht.

J. E. M.

**Union als Gewissenslast.** Wie es in Kreisen aussieht, wo Union herrscht, zeigt ein geradezu herzerreißender Appell in der „A. E. L. N.“ (17. Sept. 1937), dem wir einige Sätze, Klagerufe aus der tiefsten Seele, entnehmen. Da schreibt ein Pastor: „Daß wir kein Bekenntnis haben, das ist unsere Not. Daß bei uns jeder Professor lehren und jeder Pastor predigen kann, was er will, das ist unsere Not. Daß es dem einzelnen Pastor überlassen ist, ob er seine Gemeinde unmerklich lutherisch, uniert oder reformiert macht, das ist unsere Not. Wie weit hin ist unsere Theologie tatsächlich uniert ge-

wornden! . . . Wo bleibt da die Frage nach der Wahrheit? Uns Heutigen brennt die Not unserer Kirche auf den Fingern und im Herzen; wir sind noch nicht zur Ruhe gesetzt, sondern stehen im Kampf — und wie viele von uns schauen sehnsüchtig aus nach den Kirchen, die auf das Bekenntnis hören dürfen! Wieviel Pfarrer der Preussischen Union suchen Anschluß an den lutherischen Rat — und dürfen ihn nicht finden. Wissen Sie, wie viele Pastoren der Union um der Kirchen- und Bekenntnisnot willen zu Bischöfen lutherischer Kirche gingen, damit diese ihre Seelsorger seien? Wir bitten euch alle: seht doch die Not auch unserer Gewissen! Weist nicht auf die brüderliche Liebe hin! Wir sind es nicht, die diese verletzen. Es ist noch immer so: wo Lutheraner und Reformierte zum Gespräch kommen mit dem Willen, die Überzeugung des andern wie die Grenzen zwischen beiden zu achten [?], da kommt es noch immer zum fruchtbaren Gespräch über die Grenzen hinweg [?]. Wo aber der Unernte dazwischentritt und die Grenzen verwischen will, da gibt es Kampf und Streit. Wir für unser Teil halten die brüderliche Liebe gewiß fest, aber ebenso wollen wir auch die Wahrhaftigkeit festhalten! *Alaetheuin en agapae!* Das soll unser Wort sein; aber eben darum bitten wir: Befreit uns von der Gewissenslast der Union, denn in ihr können wir nicht beides festhalten, sondern müssen entweder die *alaetheia* oder die *agapae* verletzen.“ Wir in unserm freien Land mit unsern freien Kirchen können uns wohl kaum einen rechten Begriff von der Herzensqual machen, aus der heraus diese Worte geflossen sind. Aber wichtig ist es doch, daß wir darauf achten, was dieser Angktschrei auch uns lehren darf.

J. L. M.

**What Oxford and Edinburgh Stood For.** — Writing in the *Living Church*, Bishop G. C. Stewart of Chicago (Episcopalian) thinks that six great agreements were reached in the field of life and work: 1. The repudiation of the doctrine of the supremacy of the State over the Church; 2. the opposition to racial barriers (Jewish or otherwise) in church and society; 3. the responsibility of Christians to test economic and social institutions in the light of the will of God; 4. freedom of education and equal educational opportunities; 5. the condemnation of war as a world policy; 6. the will to present a united Christian front to the world.

With respect to Edinburgh and its deliberations on Faith and Order he holds that the conference resulted 1. in the increasing sense of present unity; 2. the consideration of doctrinal differences in an atmosphere of hope for solving all the difficulties that stand in the way of union; 3. the willingness “to realize the ideal of the Church as the living body, worshipping and serving God and Christ.”

Time will tell whether the optimists who hold that these conferences brought a deepening of the understanding of the Gospel and other real spiritual benefits are right or not.

A.

„Geistliche Psychotherapie“ in England. Unter der Führung des Erzbischofs von York hat sich in England ein Komitee von Ärzten gebildet, das eine Versuchsklinik in Hackney Wick errichten will, in der eine psychologische Heilung erprobt wird. Die Behandlung liegt ganz in den Händen von Ärzten, aber die zugrunde liegende Idee ist das Zusammenarbeiten des Arztes mit dem Geistlichen, das in England immer mehr Fortschritte macht.

Es gibt schon eine Reihe Institute, in denen das wachsende Interesse zum Ausdruck kommt, das viele englische Ärzte an diesem Grenzgebiet zwischen der Religion und der medizinischen Wissenschaft nehmen. So wurde kürzlich eine „Gilde für geistliche Psychotherapie“ gegründet, die ein Zusammenarbeiten zwischen Dienern der Religion und Ärzten bei der Behandlung der Kranken herbeiführen will; dem Komitee gehören zwei Ärztinnen an. Vor einem Jahr wurde von Rev. John Maillard das erste Haus für geistliche Heilung in Milton Abbey in Dorset gegründet, worin drei Ärzte regelmäßig Besuche machen. Der Gründer erklärte jetzt einem Berichterstatter: „Wir haben seit zwölf Monaten hier gearbeitet, und die Ergebnisse haben unsere Hoffnungen überboten, die freilich nie ganz frei waren von der Schwäche menschlicher Begrenztheit.“ In Wales gibt es viele Leute, die erklären, von ihren Krankheiten von dem Pastor George Jeffreys geheilt worden zu sein, der in London eine Schule errichtet hat, worin Lehrer und Pastoren in dieser neuen Form der Heilkunst unterrichtet werden. (Christliche Welt, Nr. 15.)

(A. E. L. R.)

**Aus Korea.** Die japanische Regierung hat angeordnet, daß in allen Schulen, die eine Regierungsunterstützung erhalten, Schintofschreine aufgestellt werden sollen. Die Regierung bezeichnet den Akt der Verneigung vor diesem Schrein des Kaisers als eine patriotische, nicht religiöse Handlung, durch die die Liebe zur Nation gestärkt werde. Aber von vielen eingebornen Christen wird der Akt doch als religiöse, dem ersten Gebot widersprechende Tat aufgefaßt. Daraufhin haben die großen Missionsgesellschaften sich entschlossen, ihr Schulwesen allmählich abzubauen. Das bedeutet die Schließung von Schulen, die jetzt 25,000 Kinder besuchen. Die evangelische Kirche in Korea zeigt neuerdings wieder ein erfreuliches Wachstum; in den letzten Jahren betrug es 75.5 Prozent. Sie zählt jetzt 520,000 Christen, 15,000 freiwillige Evangelisten und 35,000 Sonntagschüler. Von besonderer Bedeutung für das Leben der Gemeinden sind die Bibelkurse, die zu verschiedenen Zeiten abgehalten werden. Eine oder gar sechs Wochen lang kommt man zusammen zum Studium, Gebet, zur Vorbereitung auf die Predigt und zurüstung auf andere christliche Arbeit. Im letzten Jahr wurden 182,000 Besucher solcher Bibelkurse gezählt. Welche Kirche in der Welt bringt wohl so viele ihrer Anhänger so gründlich unter den Schall des Wortes Gottes?

(A. E. L. R.)

**Interessanter Fund in Ägypten.** In dem bisher bekannten reichhaltigen ägyptischen Schrifttum fehlte es an Andeutungen über die in der Bibel überlieferten sieben „mageren“ Jahre. Der Ägyptologe Selim Hassan glaubt jetzt am Fuße der Sphinx bei den großen Pyramiden von Giseh (Raizo) ein Schrift Denkmal gefunden zu haben, das die biblische Überlieferung von den Hungerjahren bestätigt. Unter einem Pharao, dessen Name nicht genannt ist, sind, wie es in dem gefundenen Dokument heißt, sieben Jahre hintereinander die sonst regelmäßig eintreffenden Überschwemmungen des Nils ausgeblieben, was Hungerernot und Epidemien zur Folge hatte. Selim Hassan glaubt diese Naturereignisse auf die Jahre vor 1700 vor Christo ansetzen zu können. Die Schrift Denkmäler dieser Zeit seien durch die Pharaonen der 18. und 19. Dynastie gründlich vernichtet worden. So erkläre es sich, daß bisher Urkunden gefehlt hätten.

(A. E. L. R.)



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## Book Review — Literature

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**Messiah: His Nature and Person.** Messianic Series No. 2. By David L. Cooper, Th. M., Ph. D., 4417 Bernice St., Los Angeles, Cal. 224 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.25.

This is an interesting and worth-while book. The author is the president of the Biblical Research Society, has written a number of conservative books, is a firm believer in the inspiration and trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures, is also well informed about Jewish learning and interpretation, knows his Hebrew well, and presents in the present volume a picture of the Messiah on the basis of the outstanding Messianic prophecies. The six chapters of the book have the following titles: "Current Jewish Conception of Messiah"; "The Angel of the Lord"; "Early Rays of Messianic Glory"; "Messiah a Descendant of David"; "The Noonday Radiance of Messianic Glory"; "The Evening Glow of Messianic Glory"; and then a table of the Scripture-texts mentioned or treated is added. The author states correctly that the Hebrew word *alma*, Is. 7, 14, can be translated only with "virgin" and not, as Rabbi Isaac Leeser renders it, "a young woman" (p. 146). When treating Is. 53, he emphasizes the atoning sacrifice of the Messiah (p. 68), and his motto for the whole book is Is. 1, 18, quoted by him in the Hebrew: "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." He makes use of the best modern commentators, like Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, Urquhart, and quotes Keil, and very properly so, again and again (pp. 94, 96, 99, 100, 113, 117, 118, etc.). But we regret to note that he also follows Keil (p. 94) in the typical interpretation of 2 Sam. 7, 12–16, although the New Testament directly refers the passage to Christ, Heb. 1, 5. And we also observe with regret that he has chiliastic leanings, quoting William Zuckerman, who speaks "of the Palestinian boom as a modern miracle. Truly, Israel's time is at hand" (p. 95). The author is a great lover of the Hebrew text, quoting it again and again without making a display of his Hebrew knowledge, and he dedicates the volume "to Dr. John R. Sampey, whose instruction in the Hebrew language caused me to thirst for the satisfying waters flowing from the perennial fountain." L. FUERBRINGER

**An Introduction to Paul.** By Paul Sevier Minear, Department of New Testament Interpretation, Garrett Biblical Institute. The Abingdon Press, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago. 82 pages, 4¼×6½.

After a brief foreword this little volume brings five chapters dealing with Paul and his work: "1. Meeting Paul; 2. Accompanying Paul; 3. Photographs of Paul; 4. Faith, Hope, and Love; 5. Paul's Legacy." The study helps that are included in the volume consist of a map, a chronological summary, selected biographies, and references and suggestions for study. The work rests on the researches and studies of the foremost scholars in this sphere and is well adapted to show our pastors and teachers what views are chiefly stressed nowadays touching the Apostle to the Gentiles. There are many illuminating paragraphs in the book. Often, however, I could not agree with the author. When he, for

instance (p. 24), thinks that Barnabas was sent to Antioch because the original Christians in Jerusalem had become alarmed on account of the addition of so many Gentile converts, he plainly goes beyond our sources. Is there any evidence that Paul and Silas had to leave Philippi because of the antagonism of Jewish residents? (Cf. p. 28.) While we reject the author's evident Modernism, we are grateful to see him point out that Paul taught the monergism of the Holy Spirit. W. ARNDT

**The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians.** By R. C. H. Lenski. Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O. 911 pages, 6x9. Price, \$4.00. Order from Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

Here another one of the volumes of the commentary of the late Dr. Lenski on the New Testament is presented to the Church. Since the nature and the excellencies of this commentary are now well known, hardly more is necessary than to announce the appearance of the new volume. Yet it would be ungracious to let this large book go on its way without a few remarks on how it treats some of the famous questions pertaining to this section of the Pauline epistles. We therefore mention a few details. Galatians is assumed by Dr. Lenski to have been written to the Christians of Southern Galatia, and good arguments are advanced for this view. The time of its composition is held to be that of the second missionary journey and the place Corinth. Ephesians is thought to have been written in Rome and to have been addressed to the congregation in Ephesus, and the modern theory of an Ephesian *provenance* of this epistle, holding that it is a circular letter, is rejected. Philippians naturally is looked upon as belonging to the first Roman imprisonment of Paul. In the interpretation of the celebrated passage Eph. 1, 3 the *intuitu fidei* view of election is championed. *Intuitu fidei* is said to be a short form for the longer phrase "in view of the all-sufficient merits of Christ perseveringly apprehended by divinely wrought faith" (p. 357). Dr. Lenski, in discussing this phrase, says: "The objection that this is, or at least sounds, synergistic depends on the conception one has of 'faith.' When one has the truly Biblical conception that faith is *in toto* divinely wrought, that all power lies in the Christ, the one and only content filling the cup of faith, the objection falls." While we hold that Lenski is mistaken in assuming that Paul taught an election *intuitu fidei*, and while we regret that he did not, like other members of his synod, disavow the phrase, we cannot charge him with synergism. In general, we may say that this volume measures up to the high standards of its predecessors. W. ARNDT

**Der Galaterbrief.** Übersetzt und ausgelegt von P. Paul Burthardt. Gustav Schöbmanns Verlagsbuchhandlung, Leipzig und Hamburg. 126 Seiten 5½x8¼. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 2.40; Ganzleinen RM. 3.20.

**Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus.** Übersetzt und ausgelegt von Dr. Wilhelm Knappe. Derselbe Verlag. 144 Seiten 5½x8¼. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 2.70; Ganzleinen RM. 3.60.

Diese beiden Bände sehen die Serie „Bibelhilfe für die Gemeinde“ fort, wie wir sie schon in verschiedenen Heften dieser Zeitschrift besprochen haben. Von

diesen Lieferungen gilt ebenfalls, was auch sonst als Vorzug hervorgehoben worden ist, daß die Übersetzungen, die in der Regel wörtlich genau sind, sehr anregend wirken. Mit andern Worten, der Bibelleser, besonders der Theolog, wird auf Grund dieser Übersetzungen immer tiefer eindringen können in die Schätze der Weisheit und Erkenntnis, die im Wort der Wahrheit vorliegen. Freilich gestattet es die Kürze der Darlegung nicht, so tief zu graben, wie man es wohl möchte. Trotzdem aber finden sich in beiden Bänden wieder köstliche Ausführungen. So heißt es z. B. zu 1 Tim. 4, 6: „Das Herz macht den Theologen“ ist ein altes wahres Wort, das heißt, die Herzensstellung vor Gott. Theologie ist nicht nur Angelegenheit eines Standes, sondern der Christenheit, und im tiefsten Sinne treiben wir alle Theologie, wenn wir den Geheimnissen des Glaubens nachsinnen und von Herzen das Glaubensbekenntnis sprechen. Die Kirche Christi, gerade auch in unsern Tagen, ist verantwortlich für eine rechte Theologie in ihrer Mitte, eine Theologie, die um das Geheimnis der neuen Geburt aus Gott weiß. Sie kann nur aus der Schrift hervorwachsen und aus den Bekenntnissen des Glaubens, in denen die Gemeinde um das rechte Schriftverständnis gerungen hat. Nur wer von Schrift und Bekenntnis lebt, kann ein rechter Diener Christi werden.“ Ähnliche Ausführungen finden sich in der Auslegung des Galaterbriefs, und beide Bücher seien hiermit unsern Pastoren angelegentlich empfohlen, womit nicht gesagt sein soll, daß wir jedes Wort in der Exegese unterschreiben. Zugleich machen wir wieder aufmerksam auf die Calwer Ausgabe von Luthers Galaterbrief, sowie auf die englische Übersetzung dieses Meisterstücks, die jetzt zu einem sehr annehmbaren Preise erhältlich ist.

B. E. Krey mann

**Church Unity.** A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians. By F. H. Knubel, president of the United Lutheran Church in America. The Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia. 86 pages, 5×7¼. Price, 75 cts.

This volume is a part of the *New Testament Commentary*, edited by Dr. H. C. Alleman, and represents the conservative position. Its interpretation of Ephesians is scholarly, simple, and instructive. We must, however, take exception to statements like these: "In the Scriptures all the weakness and fallibility of the human have been taken into the divine, overcome, and used for divine ends" (p. 46), and: "Our thoughts upon the subject of church unity must proceed upon a confession of what that death is and means for men. *This does not mean the acceptance of some special theory of the atonement*" (p. 46). (Italics ours.)

The publication of this treatise as a separate volume, with the title *Church Unity*, calls for a discussion of the plan of union advocated by Dr. Knubel. Part III, p. 45 ff., and Part V, p. 79 ff., present this plan. Referring to "the frequent arguments presented concerning the increased efficiency which would be gained by the Church through an external union," Dr. Knubel declares: "The Church must not permit herself to be tempted into an effort merely to make a shallow display of strength before the world by a supposed 'united front.'" More than this, Dr. Knubel also repeatedly insists that "truth, convictions, cannot be trimmed." "The Christians must testify for goodness and righteousness and truth. In their proclamations of their convictions as to revealed truth they must be free and courageous." This correct principle is also.

enunciated: "The Christians are to testify, bear witness. *Herein also is the unity of the Church fostered.* That unity is the unity of light in its shining, in its revealing power." (P. 67.) Unfortunately, however, this plan of union contains a provision which is in conflict with the principles just stated. "Truth, convictions, cannot be trimmed. Truth must not be set at naught nor courageous devotion to it discouraged. The very differences of denominations which result are themselves manifestations of unity in devotion to the truth if only love continues amid these differences of conviction." "Unwillingness for mutual recognition is encountered, unreadiness for possible cooperation exists." We certainly repudiate the statement that "the very differences of denominations are themselves manifestations of unity in devotion to the truth." We are unable to tell the Presbyterians that their insistence on the doctrine of particular grace springs from devotion to the truth. We cannot tell the Catholics that their denial of the *sola gratia* is due to devotion to the truth. And it is only by bearing witness to the truth against the false teaching of the Presbyterians and the Catholics that "the unity of the Church can be fostered" and restored. The plan of union we are discussing can only result in perpetuating the disunion.—The first plank in Dr. Knubel's platform calls "for full recognition that the unity of the Church already exists." That is most certainly true. The subject of Ephesians is the *una sancta*. We rejoice to know that all members of the holy Christian Church "*de evangelio consentiunt*" (Apology, VII and VIII, § 10). And we agree with Dr. Knubel that "every manifestation thereof which we discover in our relations to other Christians should thrill our hearts." On the other hand, the adherence of these Christians to false teaching, the disrupted state of the visible Church, fills our hearts with grief. And this condition can be remedied only by bearing witness against the error, not by viewing the adherence to error as "devotion to the truth."

TH. ENGELDER

**Predestination.** A Historical Sketch. By Karl Ermisch, professor at Augsburg and Northwestern Lutheran seminaries, Minneapolis, Minn. Vierth Printing Co., Sumner, Iowa. For sale at the Good Samaritan Book Store, Fargo, N. Dak. 118 pages. Price, \$1.00.

Prof. Karl Ermisch, Ph. D., S. T. D., is instructor of Systematic Theology at Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary (U. L. C.) and of Church History and Practical Theology at Augsburg Theological Seminary (Lutheran Free Church), both in Minneapolis, Minn., besides teaching German in Augsburg College, which is affiliated with Augsburg Seminary. His dissertation "Predestination" is a *dogmengeschichtliche* survey of the doctrine of election from Augustine to the adoption of the Formula of Concord, under three general heads: Absolute Predestination, Pauline Predestination, and Conditioned Predestination, culminating in a plea for the abolition of the *intuitu-fidei* trope and the acceptance of the doctrine of predestination as it is presented in Art. XI of the Formula of Concord. A few quotations may exemplify the author's point of view. He writes: "It is not possible to prove by any Scripture-passage that predestination, as Paul [rather as Scripture, for Paul's doctrine of election is not in any way different from that set forth

in other places in God's Word] teaches it, is conditioned by foreseen faith. To make predestination conditional or conditioned is equivalent to taking all consolation out of it. Paul could not have written Rom. 8, 38, 39 if he had believed in such a predestination." (P. 115.) Again: "If the *intuitu fidei* of the dogmaticians is not supported by Scripture, should it not be discarded at once? *Sola Scriptura!* Is this still the Lutheran principle? Even in the doctrine of predestination? 'What our fathers have taught the last three hundred years is good enough for us' is no argument for a real Lutheran. We honor and respect our fathers. . . . The work of our great dogmaticians is certainly worthy of our greatest respect and admiration; but we do not consider them infallible. We do not accept 'tradition' in any form. No sentimentality, no synodical favoritism or antagonism can or should decide what Lutheran doctrine is and shall be. *Sola Scriptura!*" (*Ibid.*) Or: "Dr. Reu (*Lutherische Dogmatik*, p. V, *Anhang*; not yet published) calls the interpretation of '*hous proegnoo*' as those whom He foresaw as such as would believe illicit and annoying" ("*geradezu stoerend*"). (P. 113.) Again: "The correct interpretation of the word '*proegnoo*,' '*foreknew*,' which our English language attaches to it, dispels all ideas of an election *intuitu fidei*." (P. 113.) Or: "But if we take it [predestination] in the specific sense as used by Paul in Rom. 8, 29: 'He also foreordained (*pro-oorise*) to be conformed to the image of His Son,' how many passages of the whole Bible speak of predestination *intuitu fidei*? Does it [the verb '*proegnoo*,'] refer only to an intellectual process . . . ? No! God knew us from eternity, that is, foreknew us: *He took us lovingly to His heart as His own* [italics our own] and predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son, in whom He loved us." (Pp. 112, 113.) These citations show how earnest the writer is in his appeal for the adoption of the Scriptural doctrine of predestination as presented in the Formula of Concord. Incidentally, he argues also against Calvinism and refutes Boettner's recent exaltation of Calvinistic predestinationism over the Lutheran (Scriptural) presentation of the doctrine. (Cf. Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*; Grand Rapids, 1932.) The dissertation everywhere shows comprehensive study and profound learning, while the author's firm stand on Scripture in the entire question makes it a real pleasure for every *Schrifttheolog* to peruse his fine brochure. If in the following we permit ourselves to criticize it in several points, this does not minimize our deep appreciation of the valuable work. — It would have been more profitable had the learned writer omitted his philosophical approach to the subject (cf. p. 1 ff.; also a. l.), which in many places has led to stylistic obscurity. In treating the doctrine of predestination, the utmost simplicity ought to prevail both in expression and presentation. This the author himself suggests when he writes: "Unanimity will not be possible, it seems to us, unless and until the theologians forget all about philosophy and philosophical speculation and teach nothing but that which the Bible, the inspired Word of God and only source of theology, clearly teaches. We are of the opinion that philosophy and theology must be kept strictly apart. Philosophy may furnish the tools for our theological thinking, but for the contents we look exclusively to our Bible." (P. 8.) — The writer's rather

prolix treatment of Augustinian predestinationism hardly helps the average reader in gaining clarity in the doctrine. For his purpose the entire discussion might have been omitted, especially since Augustine has been greatly misunderstood and misrepresented by our leading *Dogmengeschichtler*, whom the author largely follows. On the other hand, his critique of Calvinistic predestinationism is exceedingly keen and highly satisfactory and does much to clear up the controversy between Lutheranism and Calvinism. — The expression "Pauline predestination" is somewhat misleading, since it creates the impression as if only Paul had taught the form of election which our Lutheran Church follows. Really, the doctrine is not specifically Pauline, but altogether Biblical, as the writer himself admits in several places. The author's reasons for choosing the term are hardly valid (cf. p. 61). — His criticism of the presentation of the doctrine of election in Art. XI of the Formula of Concord (cf.: "Even a Lutheran who loves the Confession of his Church will admit that the XI. Article of the Formula of Concord is far from being the ideal in presenting the subject-matter. We do not criticize its long-windedness, . . . but we think of the lack of *inner harmony* [italics our own]," p. 71 ff.), is in our opinion rather unwarranted. If by the lack of "inner harmony" there is meant the fact that Art. XI does not harmonize the *sola gratia* with the *gratia universalis* or the *electio particularis* with the *voluntas gratiae universalis*, then the fault really lies with Scripture and not with Art. XI, since Scripture does not present any "inner harmony" on these points. — If our Lutheran dogmatists of the type of Chemnitz speak of *reprobation*, they use this expression in the sense of the *voluntas consequens*, as this is explained by Gerhard in the sense of *voluntas iustitiae* (God's judgment will upon those who have rejected the Gospel; cf. John 3, 18). — But our review is growing too long. In closing, we may add that also this dissertation in its philosophico-historical aspects shows how wisely the authors of Art. XI acted when they decided to present the doctrine just as they did present it — in its simple, practical, edifying, and comforting way, without any attempt to establish any "inner harmony," just as Scripture itself presents this precious doctrine for the consolation of those who by faith are in Christ Jesus.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**Christian Faith and the Science of Today.** By J. H. Morrison. Cokesbury Press, Nashville. 228 pages, 5¼×8. Price, \$2.00.

This is a book in Christian apologetics by an author who is thoroughly familiar with the discoveries and writings in the field of science before and since the time of Darwin. One would have to read many books to get the gist of the information offered in these few pages. And the author purports to be writing from the standpoint of confessional Christianity. And yet the Lutheran theologian will have to peruse this book with care, chiefly because the author is not consistent in his stand on the Bible and its revelation, in spite of the fact that he places a Scripture-verse or two at the head of each chapter in his book. It is refreshing to find statements like the following: "Not for a moment would one wish to be dogmatic on a theme where all human experience is transcended and all human words are doubtless vain. But it was in



referring to the resurrection of the dead that our Lord spoke so significantly of 'the power of God,' that power to which all things are possible." (P. 34.) But we ask: Why, then, make a concession to science, falsely so called, in speaking of "unrecorded ages," "countless ages," throughout the book, e. g., pp. 40. 41. 165? This presents one of the inexplicable phenomena with which the discipline of apologetics of today seems to abound. There is a difference between being a literalist and accepting the Word of God as it reads. Then, also, all "contradictions" between true science and the Bible disappear.

P. E. KRETZMANN

**Why I Believe the Bible.** By Michael Maryosip. Foreword by Thomas W. Currie, D.D. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 136 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . Price, \$1.50.

This book is a disappointment. It makes the impression at first blush that it is written by a Fundamentalist, and the first six chapters seem to support this impression, for they offer some fine apologetic material on the Bible. Yet even here we have some concessions to liberal theology which are not pleasant to read, as when the author states that the books of the Bible may "have been edited and reedited." But the entire book is spoiled by chapter VII, in which the author bluntly states: "The idea of revelation is not to be conceived in terms of words, texts, and even books, but rather in the disclosure of God Himself in the history of a people whose chief representatives were instruments of God's will." In this connection he quotes with approval the saying of George Adam Smith that "the dogma of verbal inspiration has had a disastrous influence upon the religious thought and action of our time." Books of this type are apt to do more harm to the Christian religion than an out-and-out denial of the Bible. It is a pity that the book was published.

P. E. KRETZMANN

**The Romance of the Gospel.** By the Rev. Charles T. Thrift, member of the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Introduction by M. T. Plyler, editor of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate*. The Piedmont Press, Greensboro, N. C. 303 pages,  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, \$1.25.

This is the first of a series of books on the spread of the Gospel throughout the world, the object of which is to interest the Christian people of our country more deeply in the paramount cause of world evangelization. Pastor Thrift has worked thoroughly and well, and the extensive bibliographies prove his acquaintance with the subject which he treats. The present volume traces in a general way the spread of the Gospel, from the earliest, apostolic, times up to the present in Asia, the author showing how on that great continent one country after another received and bore Christ's Gospel banner. It is a book worthy of careful study. The various onward movements of the Gospel are woven round the lives of outstanding missionaries. Even such as hold that men like Kagawa and others are not true Christians must admit that the Gospel has mightily stimulated them to serve their fellow-men. Pastor Thrift is the author of many books and pamphlets, all of which should arouse his fellow-believers to greater earnestness in serving the cause of the Gospel.

J. T. MUELLER

**The Psychology of Religious Living.** By Karl R. Stolz. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 375 pages, 6×8½. Price, \$2.50.

When an author believes that "the beginnings of religion are lost in the mists of the prehistoric race of the human race"; when he believes that religion is a natural product arising from man's experience; when he holds that "the Old Testament is a repository of several survivals of polytheistic beliefs and practises of the early Hebrews" (p. 60), we are not surprised to find a discussion of the psychology of religion controlled by purely humanistic views. This sums up what we need to say about Dean Stolz's *Psychology of Religious Living*. The chapter on the more recent development of the psychology of religion (chap. 8) and the author's discussion of occultism (chap. 18) contain valuable detail. But these chapters do not make up for the aridity of the discussion of such fundamentals as sin, temptation, prayer, and worship. These chapters could have been written by one who does not believe in a personal God.

TH. GRAEBNER

**Die Geschichte des Speyrer Reichstags, 1529.** Von Prof. Dr. Johannes Kühn. (Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte, Nr. 146.) M. Weinflus Nachfolger Eger & Sievers. Leipzig. 267 Seiten. Preis: RM. 6.80.

Die beiden Reichstage zu Speyer spielten eine überaus wichtige Rolle in der Reformationsgeschichte. Der erste, im Sommer 1526, hatte beschlossen, daß in der Religionsfrage jeder Stand sich so verhalten solle, wie er es vor Gott und dem Kaiser verantworten könne. Das war natürlich nur ein Kompromiß. Was man vor Gott und dem Kaiser verantworten könne, darüber war man sich nicht einig; aber so viel war klar: unter den Umständen, besonders in Abwesenheit des Kaisers, wagten die versammelten Stände nicht, gegen die Reformation Front zu machen. Der zweite Reichstag, 1529, versuchte dies; aber in der Zwischenzeit war die Kirche der Reformation so erstarrt, daß das Resultat eine Spaltung des Reichstages brachte. Es ist gewiß bekannt, daß dieser Reichstag jenen ersten Beschluß von 1526 wieder aufhob, wogegen dann die Evangelischen ihren Protest einreichten. Nicht so bekannt mag sein, daß infolge dieses Protestes und der darauf folgenden Verhandlungen die Aufhebung des ersten Speyrer Abschieds ihre Kraft verlor. König Ferdinand und seine Partei sahen sich genötigt, ein Stück des Beschlusses nach dem andern aufzugeben und mit den evangelischen Fürsten Sicherheitsverträge zu schließen; und so war dieser erste große Versuch der Römischen, die Reformation zu vernichten, ein Fehlschlag. Prof. Kühn zieht am Schluß dieser Abhandlung das Fazit: „So hatten zwar auch die Evangelischen nicht gefiegt, aber sie hatten sich behauptet. Sie hatten nicht erreicht, was sie natürlicherweise erstreben mußten: reichsgesellschaftliche Anerkennung oder Duldung ihres Vorgehens, dauernde Sicherheit. Aber sie hatten eine ihnen feindliche Gesetzgebung des Reiches aufgehoben und vorläufige Sicherheit, wenn auch zweifelhaften Umfangs, erreicht. Sie wußten, daß sie weiter zu kämpfen haben würden.“ Gerade das Letztere ist noch zu betonen: Seit diesem Reichstage wußte man auf lutherischer Seite, wie man dran war; die Reihen sonderten sich. Landgraf Philipp von Hessen schrieb an seine Schwester: „Der Gift wider das heilige Evangelium ist in den Beuten so groß, daß ich glaube, könnten sie alle von unserer Partei in einem Köffel ertränken, sie nähmen keine Schüssel dazu. Sie haben's lange verblümt; auf diesem Reichstag hat die Sonne den Schnee abgeleckt.“ — Zum erstenmal wird uns hier die ganze Geschichte des Protektionsreichstages geboten; man sieht, wie

viele Interessen bei den Beschlüssen in Betracht gezogen werden mußten, wie in Gottes Hand gerade die politische Lage der Reformation zugute kam. Was der Verfasser bietet, ruht auf Alten, die er für die Herausgabe der Deutschen Reichstagsakten gesammelt hat; so bringt das Buch viel neues, wichtiges und wertvolles Material.

Theo. Söyer

**Neubau der Konfirmation.** Von D. Martin Dörne. Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh. 232 Seiten 6½×9½. Preis: Kartoniert, RM. 6.50; gebunden, RM. 8.

Es ist dies ein Buch, das man nicht ohne Nutzen wird lesen können. In den ersten zwei Kapiteln gibt der Verfasser Seite 15—47 eine wertvolle Übersicht über die geschichtlichen Grundlagen der Konfirmation und kommt dann auf Seite 48—117 auf die Erneuerungsbestrebungen von 1845 bis 1935 zu sprechen, das heißt, auf die Bestrebungen, die Konfirmation den in der Volkskirche Deutschlands bestehenden Verhältnissen so anzupassen, daß sie ihren eigentlichen Zweck nicht verleugnet. Man wird nicht allem, was der Verfasser sagt, seine Zustimmung geben können. Um nur eins zu erwähnen, seine Ausführung über das Verhältnis der Taufe und des Glaubens zueinander übersieht, daß die „Aufnahme“, die „Eingliederung“, in die Kirche als den Leib Christi nicht „grundlegend durch diese Taufe, gleichgültig, ob sie in der Form der Erwachsenentaufe oder als Kindertaufe vollzogen wird“ (S. 8), sondern durch den Glauben an Jesum, den Sünderheiland, bewirkt wird. Dieser Glaube wird in den Kindern eben durch die Taufe, das Bad der Wiedergeburt, gewirkt. Die Erwachsenentaufe soll aber nach Apost. 2, 41 nur an denen vollzogen werden, „die das Wort gerne annehmen“, die also durch Gottes Wort bereits zum Glauben gekommen und eben damit in den Leib Christi eingegliedert worden sind. Diesen dient die Taufe dann nicht sowohl als Bad der Wiedergeburt als vielmehr als das Bad der Erneuerung, in dessen Kraft sie täglich den alten Adam ersäufen und den neuen Menschen hervorkommen lassen. Es herrscht hier bei dem Verfasser eine Unklarheit auch in bezug auf die sichtbare und unsichtbare Kirche. Der sichtbaren Kirche wird man durch den äußeren Akt der Taufe eingegliedert, der unsichtbaren Kirche, die allein der Leib Christi ist, allein durch den Glauben, der in den Kindern durch die Taufe gewirkt wird, der im Gehorsam gegen Gottes Wort im Taufbefehl in den Erwachsenen das Verlangen nach der Taufe erweckt.

Dem Verfasser ist es ein Ernst mit der christlichen Erziehung der heranwachsenden Jugend bis zum Mannesalter. Im dritten Kapitel weiß er über diesen Gegenstand so ernste Worte zu reden, zugleich so praktische Winke für einen solchen Unterricht zu geben, daß man ganze Seiten abdrucken möchte. Leider bleibt er in dem Gedanken der Volkskirche als schier einzig berechtigter Form der sichtbaren Kirche stehen. Allerdings hat die Volkskirche an der heranwachsenden Jugend ihre Pflicht nicht getan. Aber er meint, wenn in Zukunft die Volkskirche einen gründlicheren Unterricht in Gottes Wort gäbe, so würde man „nicht in den eiligen Rückzug auf die Linie der Freiwilligkeitskirche“ getrieben werden, vor der er einen ordentlichen Horror zu haben scheint, der des öftern zum Ausdruck kommt. Der Verfasser übersieht, daß, je gründlicher man Gottes Wort treibt, das heißt, je gewissenhafter man in seinem Unterricht Gottes Wort zur alleinigen Regel und Richtschnur des Glaubens und Wandels macht, um so weniger die Kirche eine Volkskirche sein wird. Welt bleibt Welt und läßt sich Gottes Wort nicht gefallen; sie bleibt nur bei einer Kirche, die es mit Gottes Wort nicht mehr ernst nimmt. Und je gründlicher der Unterricht in der Lehre der

modernistischen Lutheraner getrieben wird, die die Hauptstücke des Wortes frech leugnen, je mehr man um irgendwelcher Ursachen willen an einer Volkskirche festhält, die allerlei Lehre unter sich duldet, um so weniger wird diese Volkskirche eine Kirche im Sinne des großen Herrn der Kirche bleiben, Joh. 8, 31. 32; Luk. 9, 26. Wir fürchten, daß es in einer Volkskirche nie dahin kommen wird, daß ein gewissenhafter Pastor, ein Seelsorger nach dem Herzen Gottes, mit gutem Gewissen sein Amt wird führen können. Freikirche, und Freikirche mit Konfirmation und Aufnahme in die Abendmahlsgemeinschaft in dem jetzt allgemein gebräuchlichen Alter, und dann gründlicher, treuer, fleißiger Unterricht in Gottes Wort, etwa nach den Ratschlägen des Verfassers eingerichtet, das ist die einzige Weise, sich ein reines Gewissen und rechte Amtsfreudigkeit zu bewahren, zugleich auch Gottes Reich, den Leib Christi, zu bauen. Den Erfolg überläßt man dann Gott, Mark. 4, 26—29. Von seinen Dienern verlangt der Herr nicht Erfolg, sondern Treue, 1 Kor. 4, 2, und ein Teil der Treue erweist sich im Gehorsam gegen Röm. 16, 17.

L. h. S. ä t s c h

**One Thousand New Illustrations.** By Aquila Webb. Richard R. Smith, Inc., New York. 283 pages, 5¼×8½. Price, \$1.00. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

James A. Barkley, who has written the introduction to this book, says of the author: "I have studied him in his pulpit and on the platform. He knows the Bible and can reveal its truths in a more clear and convincing manner than any clergyman I have ever known. His sermons are strong and convincing because they reveal so clearly the great truths of the Bible. He preaches Christ the Savior and, like his Master, drives his lessons home by the skilful use of illustrations." When a man of this type selects illustrations for sermons, we may expect that they are in conformity with the Bible. In this we are not disappointed as we page through this book. We recommend this book to our pastors, also to laymen. The psychological reason for using illustrations is that every one thinks in pictures. An illustration well chosen will help to make the hearer better understand and remember the truth presented. Christ, in His preaching, made use of illustrations.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**The Philosophy of Christian Education.** By Herman Harrell Horne. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. N. Y. 171 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.50.

**Principles of Religious Education.** By George H. Fickes. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, N. Y. 246 pages, 5½×8¼. Price, \$2.00.

Here we have two recent books which deserve the attention of religious educators. Horne, who has written other notable books, offers his views on the fundamental points in a philosophy of Christian education in a manner which is both interesting and challenging. He is clearly a believer in some of the fundamentals of the Holy Scriptures, which is evidenced, for example, by this paragraph: "The resurrection of Jesus is a necessary consequence of His having come forth from God. He must return to God in vindication of His mission, and man must know of His return to authenticate man's salvation through Him." (P. 166.) The

essence of the philosophy of Christian education is contained in the italicized statement: "Christian education is the perfecting of man in the image of God as revealed in Christ." Yet the book throughout requires discriminating readers. The author's epigrammatic brevity sometimes results in an inadequate presentation. Besides, the author occasionally makes concessions to error or shows a deficient understanding of the doctrine involved. On page 101 he seems to present millennialist views when he speaks of Christ's principles of social reform as assuring "in God's good time the coming of the kingdom on earth." He criticizes the fact that Jesus believed in demoniac possession (p. 27); he declares that it was God's power, not His own, which Jesus used in casting out demons (p. 33); he does not understand John 17, 3 correctly (p. 48), etc. On the other hand, the chapter on "How Jesus Taught" is a splendid summary of the methods used by the Master Teacher of all times. — The second book will be a valuable addition to the library of religious educators everywhere. There are a few bad spots, it is true, as when the author tries to harmonize the "truths of geology" of the wrong kind with the truth of the revealed religion (p. 62) or when he speaks of Abraham as receiving the call from God after he himself had decided to make the decisive step (p. 75), or when he postulates the human responsibility for the incoming of the divine Spirit (p. 84). But these statements can easily be corrected, and the book, as a whole, is a splendid contribution to our literature in the field.

P. E. KRETZMANN

**Concerning Preachers.** By Josiah Blake Tidwell. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. 188 pages,  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, \$1.50.

The writer of this book presents a variety of topics which are of interest and value to the preacher. Such topics as the preacher and his body, his intellect, his family, his church, his pastoral oversight, and his sermon are treated. The author, according to his own admission, does not "attempt to present a comprehensive treatise on any of the many subjects that concern preachers" but has selected a large number which he deems "important for every preacher to know and observe." In bringing this book to the attention of our pastors, we trust that their good judgment will ignore what cannot be approved.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**On Growing Old Gracefully.** By the Rev. Charles Courtenay, M. A. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1936. 235 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . Price, \$2.00. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

This is a delightful book. The very opening paragraph of chapter 1 is bound to lure the reader on, where the author states: "Grow old we must. It is quite possible we may decide not to grow old gracefully. What are the alternatives? For we must grow old somehow. Well, we may, if we desire it, *grow old gracefully*. I use the word in a religious sense, as growing old without the grace of God, and so *gracelessly* . . . an old age without God is . . . desolating." These sentences indicate the tone of the book. It is written from the angle of a believing Christian and is replete with wholesome and witty remarks and discussions of the many

problems that confront men and women of middle and advanced age. It is difficult for the reviewer to pick out one particular section above any other, but the chapter "The Temptations of Old Age" struck him with particular force. The book closes with the paragraph "What a glorious prospect for the aged and the aging! It is good to be content. It is better to be joyous. It is best of all to be at peace in Jesus our Lord. Thank God, it is for us all—peace at the last." We earnestly recommend this book to our readers, even if they feel that they cannot agree with every statement.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Wo aber die Sünde mächtig geworden ist. Verhandlungen der Synode der Ev.-Luth. Freikirche bei ihrer 53. Synodaltagung in Groß-Singen, A. D. 1936. Verlag des Schriftenvereins (E. Klärner), Zwidau, Sachsen. 63 Seiten 6x9. Preis: M. 1.

Dieser Synodalbericht interessiert uns nicht nur wegen der vielen Mitteilungen, die er über die Arbeit unserer Brüder in Deutschland enthält, sondern besonders auch wegen des Referats über das oben angegebene Thema. Der Vortragende war Rektor D. Martin Willkomm vom Seminar in Berlin-Zehlendorf. Es wird trefflich gezeigt, was Sünde ist und wie sie zu einer schrecklichen Macht wird. Das Schlusswort weist dann auf die Überwindung hin. B. A r n d t

#### PRELIMINARY NOTICE

The Summer Session at Concordia Seminary will be held, God willing, from July 4 to July 16, 1938. With this school will be connected a Pastors' Institute. Further information will be given in our next number. Communications are to be addressed to Prof. P. E. Kretzmann, 801 De Mun Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

#### BACCALAUREATE SERVICES

With reference to the item appearing under this caption in the December, 1937, issue, it should be noticed by our readers that the item is offered merely for discussion in pastoral conferences. P. E. K.

#### NOTICE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

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